

STYLE + DESIGN 2015

MEN'S JOURNAL

SEPTEMBER 2015 Vol. 24, No. 7

56 PERFECT THINGS

TECH,
TOOLS,
TOYS
& THE
HOTTEST
NEW
GEAR

SPECIAL REPORT

**THE
DEADLY
THRILL OF
BASE
JUMPING**

**A GUIDE
TO HIGH-
END
DENIM**



The Ford GT:
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Jimmy Chin, on
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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: GRANT HARDER; SAM KAPLAN; MIKEY SCHAEFER; BEN ALSON



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FOOD

25 Things Every Man Should Know How to Cook



“There is no more important thing a man can do for his well-being than learning to cook. It boosts health and taps into our inner desire to provide for others.” —CHEF AND COLUMNIST SEAMUS MULLEN

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4. Descend until you finish with one jump squat and 10 burpees.

GEAR LAB

What We're Testing



Sony's RX100 IV

This represents the pinnacle of the point-and-shoot, with insanely fast shutter speeds and ultra-slow-motion video capabilities.

ON INSTAGRAM

Matthias Giraud, one of MJ's 50 Most Adventurous Men, snaps a selfie in Idaho before heading to Perrine Bridge, where BASE jumping is always legal. “It's a good way to crank out a bunch of jumps in a few days,” he says.



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THE 1936 STUBBY BOTTLE IS BACK

Letters

+ Just as my world was starting to feel a little limited, “25 Action-Packed Summer Trips” knocked my imagination into high gear: too many funky destinations and not enough months of summertime!

KAI LEDERER, SAN DIEGO

SAVING VIRUNGA

Emmanuel de Merode and his park rangers are a band of heroes working to save some of the world's most precious resources [“The Prince's Last Stand,” by Damon Tabor]. His fight is our gift, and we must stand up to the corruption of those trying to exploit Virunga National Park.

DYLAN HAMZA
VIA THE INTERNET

An excellent profile of Virunga National Park's chief warden — he's one tough wilderness hero. I have been fortunate enough to visit the mountain gorillas of neighboring Rwanda, and I believe that preserving the vast Virunga region of the Democratic Republic of Congo should be on the radar of all world leaders.

STEVE TYLER
ORANGE, CA

STAND TALL

I'm 60 years old and still like to play basketball, but I developed Achilles tendinitis and thought I was done for. Turns out my feet and ankles were like jelly, forcing other muscles to bear too much of the load. In addition to the

five moves shown in “Fix Your Feet” [by Michael Frank, May 2015], I'd suggest the use of a balance pad with bare feet — the combo has done wonders for me.

ED PARKER
GAINESVILLE, FL



SEALs, Divided

“Navy SEAL, Inc.,” by senior editor Stayton Bonner, sparked controversy among readers, with some praising Brandon Webb's audacious military-news network and others outraged at him for helping to expose the secret world of America's military elite.

Brandon Webb may have made himself a target of the military men who value a code of secrecy — after all, success breeds enemies. But it seems like he's really having the time of his life flying Yak 52 fighter planes for rich thrill seekers at his man-camp Bonesfest.

BRIAN RUSSO, LONG BEACH, NY

Kudos to Webb for recognizing a unique opportunity in the busy space of digital media by assembling a solid team at the Special Operations Forces Situation Report website. He delivers a great reader experience. Here's to his continued success.

CAL NEWSOM, VIA THE INTERNET

As a former U.S. Marine officer and combat veteran, I am amazed at how

many Navy SEALs are challenging the value of keeping your head down and just doing your job. I hope Webb enjoys riding the wave of SEALs having a moment in the spotlight. Many veterans and active-duty professionals are fatigued by all the self-promotion.

JOHN GARRIGAN, ENCINITAS, CA



TORQUED UP

Long live the American muscle car! May the Mustang V-8 purr for another 50 years [“Crazy Eights,” by Jesse Will].

CRAIG WINSLOW
CHICAGO

CORRECTION

In a battle scene described in “Navy SEAL, Inc.,” sniper Brandon Webb engaged the enemy at a distance of 500 yards, not 50.

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NOTEBOOK

TRAVEL & ADVENTURE





Ring of Fire

IN JANUARY, ADVENTURER SAM COSSMAN rappelled 1,200 feet into the Marum crater of Ambrym volcano, located in the South Pacific archipelago of Vanuatu. Its churning lava lake is the size of a football field, and locals call it “the entrance to hell.” “It’s otherworldly, especially at night,” says Cossman. “The sun goes down and the orange glare from the crater reflects off everything — it feels like Mars.” Cossman and his crew flew drones outfitted with cameras to record the nearly 3,300-foot-wide crater’s dimensions, the first time the volcano has been mapped. Over 21 days the team suffered through downpours of acid rain and falling lapilli — pellets of molten rock that float like ash but burn like smoldering needles. When Cossman ventured into the crater, often hanging less than 20 yards from the exploding magma, the extreme heat melted not only the face shield on his custom fire suit, which had been tested up to 3,000 degrees, but also the cameras and drones. “There’s an element of terror,” he says, “though it was more about being present and acknowledging that so few people get the chance to see the inner workings of our planet.” —**MARIELLE ANAS**



Beaumont rode an average of 160 miles per day to reach the coast of South Africa in 41 days.

RECORD BOOK

From Cairo to Cape Town

How Scotsman Mark Beaumont became the fastest person to bike across Africa. by **DAVID BROWNE**

IT WASN'T THE THREAT of kidnapping in Sudan. Or the dodgy roadside bivouacs in Egypt and Botswana. It wasn't even the sandstorms in the Sahara — in fact, they helped push Mark Beaumont and his bike along, at up to 30 miles per hour. What really set the Scotsman back on his record-breaking ride from Cairo to Cape Town were the nearly unmanageable roads in Ethiopia. On them he suffered nine tire punctures in five days. When it rained, his wheels got so clogged with mud that he had to use a spoon he'd packed to free them.

"The rain was torrential, and it would turn the dirt roads into a pig's field," he says. "And then the sun would come out and cake it solid."

Beaumont should have known what to expect. In 2008 the Scotsman had biked around the world in 194 days, breaking the record for fastest circumnavigation on a two-wheeler. The following year he pedaled from

Anchorage, Alaska, to Argentina. Then came his attempt at setting the mark for fastest row across the Atlantic Ocean, in 2012. Halfway through, he and his crew were hit by a surprise wave, capsizing their boat. They clung to a life raft for 14 hours before being rescued.

"What I realized is that, in part, I do adventures to push myself mentally and



In many cities, local riders joined Beaumont for a small section of his ride.

physically but mostly to experience the excitement around the corner," says Beaumont. "The Atlantic is boring as hell."

Soon after, he settled into a life as a freelance sports reporter for the BBC. He married, had a daughter, and put his adventurer life behind him. That is, until he found himself interviewing athletes about their exploits. "Hearing all their amazing stories, I got more and more jealous," Beaumont recalls. "I was thinking, 'I'm not done yet.'"

Convincing his wife that he could reenter his former profession wasn't easy. "It's a selfish lifestyle," he admits. "I nearly didn't come back from the Atlantic." After promising her that he'd avoid anything as dangerous as ocean rowing, Beaumont saddled up again to take a crack at riding the length of Africa, a record last set in 2011.

Beaumont's route took him through Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Botswana, and South Africa. He avoided much of South Sudan for security reasons, but each country he did visit brought its own unexpected challenges, such as being shoved off narrow roads in Tanzania by trucks or biking as fast as he could past baby elephants just feet away from him.

The sight of a white man on an expensive bike inspired a range of reactions. In Ethiopia, a few hostile locals chucked stones and jeered at him. When he slept outside at shelters — which he often did — he locked himself to the frame and tires to avoid theft.

Yet Beaumont encountered an equal number of warm gestures. In the small section of Sudan that he did travel through, he found the locals particularly friendly, despite the ongoing political upheaval.

"People welcome you and give you food," he says. "They want to show you something other than what the news says." There and in other countries that he visited, villagers sitting around open fires would invite him to sleep for the night and feed him, usually goat meat, rice, and beans. "In the U.S. or Europe, you're always looking for a hotel or something established," he says. "In Africa, if there's a village, there's a place to stay and there's food."

When Beaumont finished in May — 6,718 miles in 41 days and 10 hours, breaking the previous record of 59 days, set only weeks earlier by South African Keegan Longueira — he felt mostly relief. After arriving back home, he discovered that his daughter, now almost two, had learned to navigate stairs and say new words. He's still eyeing a few more records, but his two-month Africa ride made one thing clear. "I wouldn't want to be away from home for any longer than that anymore," he says. "My days of half-year expeditions are behind me." ■



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Clockwise: False Creek Inlet and Vancouver's skyline; cruising the North Shore Mountains; steamed buns at Bao Down



FOUR-DAY WEEKEND

Pacific Coast Paradise

With rugged mountains, shimmering waterways, a global vibe, and the best Asian food outside of Asia, the dream endures in Vancouver. **by ANDREW LEONARD**

AT THE HIGHEST POINT of Vancouver's Lion's Gate Bridge, Vanessa Voss signals for a stop. We park our bikes and take stock of the vistas: to the west, the Georgia Strait, dotted with sailboats and container ships; behind us, the skyscrapers of Vancouver's city center towering over the waterfront; at the bridge's end, our destination — the North Shore Mountains, covered in dense forests of hemlock and Douglas fir. No question about it: Vancouver is displaying its best self.

I met Voss two days earlier, after checking in at the Fairmont Pacific Rim, where she runs a free-bike program for guests. Her official title is bike butler, which says a lot about Vancouver. (Where else, I wondered, is bike butler an actual career?) When I asked her for suggestions about where to ride, Voss, an avid racer, offered to spend her day off


accompanying me into the hinterlands. I'd heard that Vancouver was friendly, but this was next-level hospitality. It was also pure Vancouver in action: Like so many locals, Voss wasn't about to waste a chance to get out of the city and into the wild. "That's the way we do it here," she told me.

Fourteen miles of desperately-hanging-on-to-Voss's-wheel later, we arrive at Deep Cove, a tucked-away paradise off Burrard Inlet, a major waterway (think San Francisco Bay or the Hudson River) separating the city of Vancouver from British Columbia's mainland interior. Paddleboarders and kayakers navigate the serene waters. Voss points out a popular hiking route to a lookout called Quarry Rock. We grab some snacks at Honey's Doughnuts & Goodies, a local institution, and chat up some amiable firefighters. The rural bliss is difficult to comprehend:

We are not even 20 miles from the center of Canada's third-largest metro area, with a population of 2.4 million.

Among Canadians, Vancouver is akin to what California once was for Americans: laid-back, physically gorgeous, and welcoming to freethinkers, dreamers, and rebels seeking to reinvent themselves. In the 1990s, hundreds of thousands of mostly upper-class Hong Kong Chinese, fearful of an imminent communist takeover, put their own spin on that vibe, taking advantage of Canada's relatively lax immigration policies and transforming Vancouver into the most Asian city in North America.

My first afternoon in town, I head to the Craft Beer Market in Olympic Village, developed to house athletes during the 2010 Winter Games. Set in an enormous 1930s salt warehouse, the beer market offers 140



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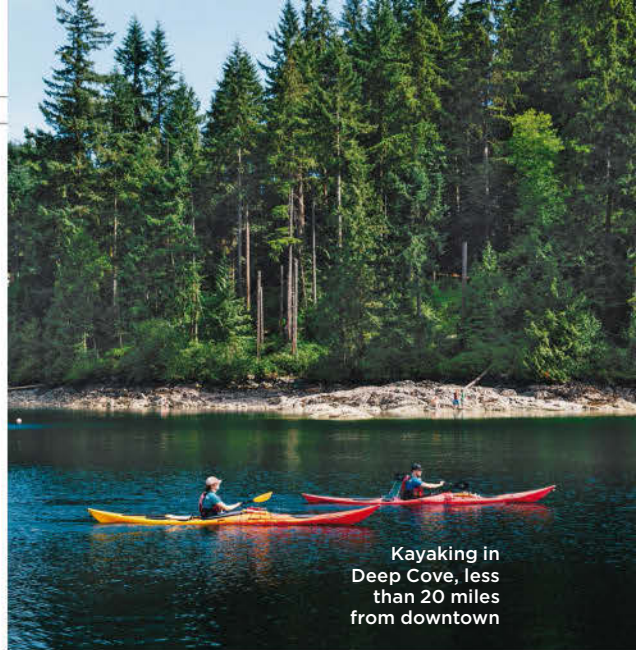
taps of craft brews. My companion is Lance Berelowitz, an urban planner and author of *Dream City: Vancouver and the Global Imagination*. As I sip a pint of Fat Tug IPA, Berelowitz explains that since the 1970s, Vancouver has had a reputation as the archetypal “smart” city, with an approach to urban design that has come to be known as Vancouverism. Berelowitz checks off the key points: no freeways breaking up the core city and few clusters of big-box superstores clogging its arteries. And there’s a pronounced emphasis on expansive public space and sight lines — turn a corner in Vancouver and you’ll probably see the ocean or mountains, or both — and dedicated bikeways and pedestrian paths skirt every beach. “What we sell is a lifestyle,” Berelowitz tells me. “A highly desirable, healthy, easy, and very safe lifestyle.”

Vancouver’s success in attracting newcomers has bred something deeply interesting: a collision of classic 21st-century post-hippie values (Vancouver is green! Organic! Bike-friendly!) with Asian traditions. This is most obvious in the domain of

food. The city justifiably boasts the best Chinese food outside China (and maybe the best sushi outside Japan) and is naturally home to a vast amount of cross-cultural foodie experimentation.

This commingling is best captured by a visit to the Richmond Night Market, a festival of food and hubbub in a Chinese neighborhood near the airport. Richmond is not a Chinatown; it’s full-bore China. The market includes hundreds of stalls offering every possible variation of Chinese street food and retail knickknacks like cellphone chargers. It’s part *Blade Runner*, part *Portlandia*. At one stall I gobble down spicy squid on a stick; at another I devour a “spinach and kale, bacon and bonito torched-soy-salmon” taco. The shoulder-to-shoulder crowd looks to be 90 percent ethnically Asian, but stop to listen and at least half speak in perfectly accented Canadian English.

That’s new Vancouver. The next day, at the University of British Columbia’s Museum



Kayaking in Deep Cove, less than 20 miles from downtown

of Anthropology, I experience old — really old — Vancouver, wandering around the museum’s acclaimed collection of elaborate totem poles, some looming 50 feet tall. These were created by the First Nations people who started settling here 10,000 years ago. I crane my neck to gawk at one masterpiece, admiring the carved image of a bear with a frog in its mouth, surrounded by wolves as I ponder a Vancouver that existed long before seawalls or skyscrapers or soy-salmon tacos.

The age-old fecundity of Vancouver’s mountains, ocean, and forests continues to work its spell, even on the newest inhabitants. Earlier that day I headed to 49th Parallel, a café and bakery in the Kitsilano neighborhood. This once was the center of hippie Vancouver; now the head shops and record stores are flanked by upscale restaurants and fancy boutiques. I was with Curtis Luk, an up-and-coming chef who just launched his first restaurant, Mission. But rather than tap his deep Chinese roots, he’s focusing on his newer ones. “I’m really inspired by the ingredients around here,” Luk says. That makes sense to me: The more I eat, the more I find that my best bet for a superb meal is to indulge in the natural bounty of the region. The local kushhi oysters at Rodney’s Oyster House are the best I’ve ever slurped. Following Luk’s urging, I track down some spot prawns, trap-caught in the Georgia Strait and available only a few weeks a year, at the Blue Water Café. The shrimp are so sweet and luscious you could eat their heads whole.

Vancouver begs you to gobble up the local seafood and guzzle the local beer, to sail its waters and explore the nearby mountains. That California dream, that West Coast quest, has always been about grasping the good life, a life that maximizes access to the great outdoors and attention to in-the-moment bliss. Vancouver delivers that dream with a jolt of Asian spice. It is a potent combination. ■

Essential Vancouver

Where to Stay

The luxurious **Fairmont Pacific Rim** is downtown, on the water, with stunning views across Burrard Inlet (from \$480).

Hipster Vancouver is in full effect at the **Opus Hotel**, a sleek boutique hotel in Yaletown (from \$290).

Where to Eat

In Old Chinatown, the **Bao Bei Chinese Brasserie** conjures the spirit of old Shanghai with excellent

cocktails and exceptional dumplings.

H K B.B.Q. Master, in Richmond, serves unforgettable Cantonese-style roast pork belly.

For some of the city’s finest seafood, hit the **Blue Water Café**, in Yaletown. Head straight to the sushi bar and ask for the omakase.

Where to Rent Gear

BIKES: **Reckless**, in Yaletown, offers hybrids (\$15 for 90 minutes) and

carbon-fiber racers (\$127 for two days).

SUPS AND KAYAKS: **Vancouver Water Adventures**, on Granville Island, will have you on the water in minutes (kayaks: \$20 per hour; SUPs: \$16 per hour).

Don’t Leave Without...

Walking or biking the full length of **False Creek Inlet**, a five-mile journey that takes you to the city’s nicest beaches and coolest neighborhoods.

Exploring **Granville Island**. Set in False Creek inlet, the island is a working fishing port with a ridiculously gourmet food court. Sip locally brewed sake at **Artisan Sakemaker**.

Hiking or biking in **Stanley Park**. A 1,001-acre slab of rain forest jutting into the Georgia Strait, this is Vancouver’s busiest gathering place. Think Central Park with beaches.



Granville Island Public Market

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Jimmy Chin's Toughest Feat

In his new film, *Meru*, the adventure photographer captures what it's really like to risk it all on a 21,000-foot peak. **by RYAN KROGH**

Chin has often remained behind the scenes while shooting the world's top athletes — until now.



Around the time they began dating, Vasarhelyi agreed to collaborate on the film, and she started by reinterviewing Anker, Ozturk, and Chin. “Climbing is an understated culture,” says Vasarhelyi. “They don’t brag, so my central question going in was: Can they emote, and can they open up about their experiences? At the core seemed to be a story of a friendship that you didn’t have to understand climbing to be compelled by.”

A focus became the often difficult decisions the team was forced to make. Ozturk, for example, began suffering strokelike symptoms on *Meru* — he’d fractured his skull and broken two vertebrae in a ski accident only six months prior — but the team decided to push on after his blurred vision cleared. “The thing is, we don’t always make the best decisions,” says Chin. “We’re all fallible, and people get that.”

Chin was climbing *Meru* on the heels of his own near-fatal incident. Less than a week after Ozturk’s accident, Chin was swept up by a massive avalanche in the Tetons. It should have buried him, but he wound up floating on top, uninjured. “When you get taken down like that, it really hammers home how insignificant you are,” says Chin.

“I talked to him that afternoon and asked if, in the avalanche, it occurred to him that today was not the day to die,” says Anker. “He was like, ‘Yeah, that happened.’ So I was like, ‘All right, you’re fine, let’s go climbing.’”

Chin’s ski partners had captured footage of the avalanche, but Chin left it out of the film’s original version. It was Vasarhelyi who persuaded him to include it. “She was like, ‘Look, you’re a central character in this film, you have to be in it,’” says Chin. Also included at the last moment was a scene of Anker offering Chin the climb’s final pitch, which allowed Chin to tag the summit first. “High-altitude climbing is so dangerous that you think a mentor would try to stop you,” he says. “But Conrad, more than anyone, understands that it’s an insatiable calling, so instead he’s got to show you how to manage the risk and live with it.”

With a wife and daughter, Chin, now 41, is going on fewer big trips. “It definitely affected the risk calculus,” he says. “But it’s also age and experience — I’ve seen a lot of things go down, and I’ve lost a lot of friends.” In many ways, he says, making *Meru* helped him appreciate one of the reasons he still loves to climb. “I have a few more expeditions in me,” he says, “but they’re more about shared experiences with your friends, and you can have those without doing the gnarliest thing in the world.” ■

JIMMY CHIN MAY BE climbing’s ultimate eyewitness. In 2006, when Americans Kit and Rob DesLauriers skied from the summit of Everest, Chin lugged a camera up top to shoot the duo carving turns on the Lhotse Face — then clipped into his skis to follow them down. In 2013, when a team of North Face athletes traveled to a remote section of Oman’s coastline to assess its climbing potential, it was Chin who photographed the trip. “I like being behind the camera,” he says. “I like to tell other people’s stories.”

In his new film, *Meru*, Chin finds himself both behind *and* in front of the camera. The movie, which won the Audience Award at Sundance in January, follows Chin, Conrad Anker, and Renan Ozturk as they make the first summit of the Shark’s Fin route on *Meru*, a 21,850-foot peak in northern India. “It’s like putting El Cap on top of Denali,” says Chin, who grew up in Minnesota and spent his early climbing days in Yosemite, often hiding out in caves at night with the likes of Dean Potter. The climb is regarded as one of mountaineering’s most impressive feats, and *Meru* may be the rare climbing film that captivates both climbers and nonclimbers alike.

The movie’s real strength is its raw look at the men themselves, their individual motivations and vulnerabilities. But like the ascent

itself, the movie almost didn’t happen. When it was first sent out, in 2012, the original cut was rejected by a number of film festivals.

“It was dead in the water,” says Chin over breakfast on Manhattan’s Upper East Side, where he now splits his time with his wife, documentary filmmaker Elizabeth Chai Vasarhelyi. The two met shortly after the climb, when Chin was trying to find a home for *Meru*, and he sent her a rough cut. “At first I don’t think she was that interested in me,” says Chin. “She was just like, ‘What are you doing with this film?’” They began meeting regularly in New York and at Chin’s house, outside Jackson, Wyoming, and things quickly escalated. In 2013, they married and had a daughter soon afterwards.



Chin on assignment in Yosemite

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Guided Trips for Adventure Travelers

A new type of custom tour helps you master even the most far-flung journeys. by **BERNE BROUDY**

FANTASIZING ABOUT A ROAD TRIP across Patagonia but need an expert to plan your route? Hoping to bike from winery to winery in Napa and want a private tour of a few cellars? New self-guided custom trips — general itineraries that are designed by guide companies, then customized for individuals or families traveling on their own — are making ambitious trips easier and cheaper than ever before. You get to explore by yourself but have the peace of mind that comes with booking through a company, including emergency assistance. “Busy schedules make travel precious,” says Jennifer Deacon of Quench Trip Design. “A trip curated for you lets you avoid mistakes about where to go, what to do, and how to get there.” Here are four of the best new tours and the companies behind them.

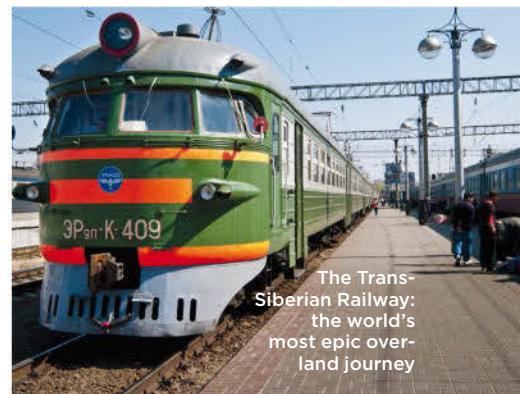


After 12 days of motorcycling through Ecuador, you'll earn bragging rights for a year.

TOUR ECUADOR BY MOTORCYCLE

Ecuador has everything from snowcapped volcanoes to Amazonian rain forest and tropical ocean, with hundreds of miles of road in between — and the best way to explore it all might be by motorcycle. With Freedom Bike Rental's tour, you'll get a dual-sport bike, a handpicked itinerary, and a GPS to help you find your way. Riding on a mix of pavement and dirt tracks, you'll cruise past banana plantations, local markets, and the ancient Incan solar temple in Ingapirca, known as Ecuador's Machu Picchu. Plus, Freedom will be there for you should any problem arise. “We managed to wear through a front tire in eight days,” says Keith Matteson of Newport, Oregon. “But Freedom gave us the GPS coordinates of a bike shop in town, and we were back on the road in an hour.” After 1,600 miles on the bike, you'll have a year's worth of stories.

THE DETAILS: 12-day tours offered year-round, from \$2,750. freedombikerental.com



The Trans-Siberian Railway: the world's most epic over-land journey

RIDE THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY

It's the world's longest railroad and a journey that takes in everything from the Siberian forest to the unbroken steppes of Mongolia. Trans-Siberian Travel will book all your tickets — the journey from Moscow to Beijing is a series of rides rather than a continuous one — and will set you up with B&B-like homestays when you're not sleeping on the train. By day, watch the taiga float past your window. At night you can explore cities such as Irkutsk, where artists and intellectuals banished during the Decembrist revolt set up a booming cultural center around their hand-carved wooden houses. Just make sure to set aside three days for hiking along the shores of Lake Baikal, the world's deepest lake.

THE DETAILS: 17-day tours from Moscow to Beijing, from \$2,160. Summer is the time to go. trans-siberian.travel

HIKE THE PILGRIM'S PATH IN NORTHERN SPAIN

The Camino de Santiago, a 500-mile pilgrimage route from the Pyrenees, on the French border, to the shrine at Santiago de Compostela, 30 miles from the Atlantic coast, is a must-do for backpackers looking to see Spain's pastoral side. “Witnessing the swinging incense pendulum in the cathedral is a highly spiritual experience,” says guide Diego Martin, “even if you're not religious.” Country Walkers' trek lets you hit all the highlights, from Basque mountain villages to an 11th-century monastery. They'll transport your gear and, at the end of each day, give you a ride to your hotel. Customize your trip by adding a night in Burgos, the gastronomic hub near La Rioja, famous for its easy-drinking tempranillos.

THE DETAILS: Nine-day treks offered May through October, from \$3,198.

countrywalkers.com (continued on page 27)



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April 2014

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Biking in
Hawaii: the
paradise
beyond the
beaches



CYCLE HAWAII'S BIG ISLAND

On the Big Island, away from the surf and sand, there's a series of byways that rival France's and Colorado's for cycling supremacy. You can rent a bike on your own to ride the blacktop through macadamia plantations and rain-forest thickets, across misty highlands and black volcanic flows. But Lifecycle Adventures will book the hotels for you, transfer your luggage, and offer roadside assistance if you get a flat. You're still on your own, which means you can go at your pace and make the time to stop for local tuna tartare or to take a swim. "On bikes you can roll onto the private white sands at Hapuna Beach for

bodysurfing or snorkeling," says former Ironman athlete Gabi Giovanoli, who developed the tours. "The beach allows only a handful of visitors in cars." At night, a driver will shuttle you to your choice of one of the area's best restaurants, such as Mi's Italian Bistro, for hand-cut pasta and local seafood. While riding south from Kona, be sure to hit up Kealahou Bay for an early-morning swim with dolphins or, in Volcanoes National Park, get out of the sun for a hike through the 500-year-old Thurston Lava Tube. **THE DETAILS:** Three-to-seven-day tours offered year-round, from \$1,170. lifecycleadventures.com

Take a Mystery Vacation

If you're tired of spending more time planning a trip than relaxing on it, Magical Mystery Tours may have the answer. They design custom vacations by asking you a series of questions — e.g., what climate you like, if you want to go abroad, and how much you want to spend — then book flights, hotel rooms, and items like museum tickets. And, yes, it's a surprise: One week prior, you get a packing list and flight info, and depending on your preferences, you could be off for a weekend in



Vermont or five days in Hong Kong. "We thought we were headed to France or Croatia, but they sent us to the Azores," says Boston's Dave Munsell, who

booked a tour for his honeymoon. "It was the greatest 10 days of our lives." It's the fun without the frustration. **From \$1,200; magical-mystery-tours.com**



EXPERT ADVICE

Securing Your Data on the Road

Last year, 12.7 million Americans had their data stolen. Security experts warn that traveling with smartphones, tablets, and laptops heightens the risk. "You face an increased number of vulnerabilities when you travel," says Eva Valasquez, of Identity Theft Resource Center. "The biggest is public WiFi." Here's how to keep your data safe while on the road.

• Choose Networks Manually

"People are too relaxed about connecting automatically to WiFi, which can expose you to rogue networks," says Jason Eaddy, an expert at security and forensics firm Elysium Digital. For instance, be wary of a network called Starbucks when there's no Starbucks nearby.

• Use Your Phone's Data Instead

Even if you're logged on to a hotel's or cafe's WiFi with a password, it's possible hackers can access your devices. Data transactions on cell networks are generally more secure. You can tether your laptop to your phone or create a hotspot with your phone (plans are sold through your carrier) and connect to that.

• Use a Password Manager

Most experts recommend using a service like 1Password or LastPass, which allows you to remember only one pass phrase for its site but generates long, complex passwords for every other site you use — meaning if one website gets compromised, the password won't expose you on others.

• Smarten Up Your Web Browser

"Get a plug-in called HTTPS Everywhere on Firefox and Chrome, which encrypts your data," says Eaddy. You can also get a VPN service, which prevents middlemen from monitoring traffic. It's available from \$5 per month from NordVPN or Private Internet Access.

Tom Oar lives in a handmade cabin in Montana's Yaak Valley.



Inside TV's Wildest Show

Tracking 21st-century frontiersmen with the creators of *Mountain Men*. by ELLIOTT WOODS

THE FIRST OBSTACLE to becoming a TV mountain man is the criminal background check. "That's thrown a few out right there," says Chris Richardson, sipping a beer. Richardson, the 46-year-old co-creator of the hit show *Mountain Men* — a reality series about guys surviving off the land — is sitting in a bar in Yaak, Montana, in February, explaining how he tracks down

a real-life Grizzly Adams for the series. "We've found some of our best characters with boots on the ground — just going where you might expect to find someone living off the grid and asking local game wardens and townspeople," says Marc Pierce, 54, the show's other creator. The Montana-based duo discovered the stars of one of the most successful outdoors shows in history, *Duck Dynasty*, and are now working to ensure that *Mountain Men* (whose fourth season is airing on the History Channel) spotlights the wildest men on TV — but finding off-the-grid talent is a challenge. "We want guys who live at the end of the road," Pierce says, "or beyond the road."

Debuting in 2012 with three modern-day Jeremiah Johnsons (Tom Oar, a tanner in Montana; Eustace Conway, a subsistence farmer in North Carolina; and Marty Meierotto, a fur trapper in Alaska), the show

has now featured eight recluses, hailing from the fringes of New Mexico, Idaho, and Maine — and Pierce and Richardson are always on the hunt for more. "When we moved into mainstream TV, we thought our location here in Montana would put us at a disadvantage," Richardson says. "But it's been just the opposite."

Based in Missoula, Pierce and Richardson's company, Warm Springs Productions, employs 90 people to coordinate and wrangle its stars, and to record their grueling everyday lives. Five-man camera teams live for weeks at a time with the mountain men, often braving extreme conditions with little more than a backpack's worth of supplies — it's one of the more dangerous jobs in TV. Mason Gertz, a cameraman filming Meierotto, plunged through river ice in Alaska in 30-below-zero weather and had to scramble a mile back to a cabin to avoid freezing solid. "I also nearly lost part of my hand to frostbite while trying to film a lynx," Gertz says. "If it weren't for Marty's help, I'd be missing three fingers." Crew members who follow Rich Lewis, a professional houndsman in southwest Montana, have been charged by mountain lions mul-



Marc Pierce (left) and Chris Richardson travel the country to find modern mountain men.

FROM TOP: NELS ISRAELSON/HISTORY CHANNEL; ELLIOTT WOODS



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multiple times. "When prospective cameramen start talking about decent hotels and per diems, we know it's not going to work out," Richardson says. "Our guys know how to keep batteries from freezing, lug 50-pound cameras up to 10,000 feet on elk hunts, and make do without electricity for days."

In part, Pierce and Richardson are motivated to push limits and rule ratings due to the show that got away — *Duck Dynasty*. After working together on fringe outdoors shows like *Escape to the Wild* — Pierce was the host and Richardson the cameraman — the two founded Warm Springs in 2007 and soon had their first hit. *Duck Commander*, a show about the patriarch of a Louisiana family with Old Testament beards that owns a handmade-duck-call company, ran for three seasons before getting scooped up by A&E and repackaged as *Duck Dynasty*. Warm Springs was left out of the deal. "It hurt because we weren't chosen to produce it — we were just the hunting-and-fishing-show dudes," Pierce says. "But it gave us fuel to prove ourselves."

Unlike *Duck Dynasty*'s Robertson family — whose empire has earned more than \$400 million, with licensing deals that include beard balms and Las Vegas musicals — the mountain men aren't doing TV in order to upgrade to mansions. Oar, for one, still lives in the log cabin he built by hand, survives off whitetail deer he hunts with a rifle and handmade bow, and drives a beat-up truck. "I sold \$600 worth of muskrat skins to pay for that old thing," he says. Although Oar is paid a modest stipend by the show, he still makes most of his income from selling pelts. "I'm doing good trapping," he says.

The next day, Richardson walks through Warm Springs' office in Missoula — an airy concrete-floored space with 19-foot ceilings, where employees' dogs wander the desks looking for someone to play fetch. This summer, Pierce and Richardson will hit the road again, traveling to the farthest corners of the continent to find new mountain men. "We're planning a trip to the Yukon," Richardson says. "It's always got great characters." Despite years of tracking down wild men, there's still no blueprint, Pierce later says, grinning as he recalls a time in Maine when they were led to a guy named Trapper Jack. "The locals gave us physical descriptions like, 'Turn at the third tree, and go to the old junk car.' We finally find the place, and there are all these threatening signs saying trespassers will be shot — we thought, 'This guy could seriously be waiting to shoot us.'" Pierce smiles. "Then he comes out and meets us and is like, 'Mountain Men? I love that show!'" ■



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FOOD & DRINK

15 New Ways to Eat Corn

Sprinkled with cheese, braised with tomatoes, slathered in mayo... How to take your favorite summer staple to the next level. by **FRANCIS LAM**

1

MEXICAN STREET CORN

Take raw, shucked ears and grill until lightly charred. Sprinkle with salt, spread with sour cream or mayonnaise, add fresh lime juice, and sprinkle with chili powder and cotija or parmesan cheese.

2

SAUTÉED WITH SALAMI

Heat a large, olive oil-slicked sauté pan over medium heat, then drop in a handful of finely chopped soppressata. When the meat begins to sizzle, add a couple of handfuls of raw corn kernels, salt to taste, and toss over high heat until cooked but still a little crisp, about 3 minutes. Toss with black pepper.

3

BRAISED WITH TOMATOES

Add olive oil to a large sauté pan over high heat, and add enough raw kernels to cover the pan. Give them a good, caramelizing sear, about 2 minutes. Add 2 or 3 chopped tomatoes and some diced sausage. Lower heat to medium, and simmer until tomatoes are reduced to a sauce, about 10 minutes. Salt to taste, and finish with chopped green onions.

4

WITH GRILLED CHEESE

The next time you have a hankering for grilled cheese, add 2 tbsp of raw corn kernels, a couple of apple slices, and a pinch of curry powder before grilling. Really.

5

WITH ROASTED MUSHROOMS

Cut mushrooms into ½-inch pieces and toss with chopped shallots, salt, pepper, and



6

"HAM AND CHEESE" BRUSCHETTA

Fold a handful of raw kernels into ricotta cheese and season with salt and olive oil. Serve on toast with prosciutto.

olive oil and spread in one layer on a baking sheet. Roast in a 450° oven until browned, 8 to 10 minutes. Add 2 cups raw corn kernels and roast another 3 to 5 minutes. In a separate pan, sauté some chopped garlic in butter and add to the mushrooms, along with butter and lemon juice.

7 SAUTÉED WITH BROWN-BUTTER PINE NUTS

Sauté a handful of pine nuts in a big knob of butter over medium heat until the butter browns; then add some chopped shallots. When the shallots are translucent, add 2 cups of raw corn kernels and salt to taste. Sauté until corn is hot all the way through, about 3 minutes.

8 CREAMED CORN (NO CREAM REQUIRED)

Finely grate 6 to 8 ears of raw corn on a box grater, and toss with a few tbsp of grated onion. Transfer, with all the juices, into a heavy pan and bake in a 350° oven for 20 to 30 minutes, until it's thickened and the top is browned. Stir in salt, pepper, butter, and lemon juice to taste. Top with crisp bacon bits if you have them.

9 CRUNCHY CORN SALSA

Mash a minced garlic clove with a couple of anchovies. Squeeze in some lemon juice and let sit for 10 minutes; add a few splashes of olive oil. Throw in a handful each of chopped parsley or basil and raw corn kernels, and salt to taste.

Add more lemon juice and olive oil to keep it loose. Spoon this over chicken, fish, meat — anything.

10 CRUNCHY CORN ON THE COB

Grill or roast whole ears or boil in salted water until just tender, slather on mayo, then roll in a mix of crushed salted peanuts and canned fried onions.

11 STIR-FRIED WITH SHRIMP AND GREEN BEANS

Boil a cup of cut green beans in well-salted water for 2 minutes and rinse under cold water until

cool. Cut a couple of handfuls of shrimp into bite-size pieces, pat dry with paper towels, and season with salt. Mince 2 tbsp of ginger, garlic, and green onions together. Heat a sauté pan and coat with vegetable oil. When it smokes, add the shrimp and sear for a minute. Add the ginger mixture and toss. Add 2 cups of raw corn kernels and green beans, salt to taste, and cook about 3 minutes. Finish with a few splashes of soy sauce or fish sauce and lime juice.

13 CREAMY CORN SOUP

In a pot, sauté a few tbsp of finely chopped onion, garlic, and ginger in butter until aromatic. Add a few cups of grated raw corn, the cobs, and chicken stock to cover. Simmer 20 minutes, remove cobs, and finish the soup with a splash of cream or a pat of butter, lemon juice, and salt. (Optional: Puree some or all of the soup, and pour through a strainer before serving.)

14 WITH SCRAMBLED EGGS

Scramble eggs with green onions and corn kernels, and serve with thin slices of smoked salmon.

15 SWEET-CORN GRITS

Grate or mince raw corn and fold it into a pot of grits about 10 minutes before they're done. Your grits have never been sweeter.

CORN 101

Get it right, every time.

• **Removing the kernels:** Lay the shucked ear on its side on a cutting board, pointing away from you. With a sharp chef's knife, slice the kernels off one side of the cob, rotate so it's lying on the flat side, and repeat. When you're done, be sure to scrape the knife down the cob to extract the sweet juice hidden in the nooks and crannies.

• **Boiling:** Corn is very forgiving — not only does it taste great raw, it's almost impossible to overcook. Bring a big pot of well-salted water to a rolling boil and cook corn for 3 to 10 minutes, depending on how tender you want it.

• **Grilling:** Lightly oil shucked ears and season with salt and pepper; place directly on grill over medium-high heat, turning every couple of minutes, until the kernels are translucent and slightly charred all the way around, about 12 minutes.

12

A PERFECT CORN SALAD

Squeeze a few tbsp of lemon juice over grated garlic (1 clove per 3 ears of corn), and marinate for 10 minutes. Toss raw kernels and some halved cherry tomatoes with salt, pepper, the garlic marinade, and olive oil. Toss with basil, parsley, or mint, and serve with yogurt.



Inside-Out Crab Cakes

The trick to the crunchiest ones you've ever had? Rethink the filling. **by FRANCIS LAM**

EVERYONE LOVES a good crab cake, but let's be honest: Most of the time you're just eating expensive stuffing. The best ones I've ever had were back in culinary school when a chef from Baltimore rode up on his motorcycle with fresh-caught crab strapped to his bike. He made the cakes from nothing more than the crabmeat, salt, a little mayo, and mustard — and that's it. It was a testament to simplicity (and good crab).

But you don't need this morning's catch to make perfect crab cakes. The Baltimore chef's other trick was to bake rather than fry them. Baking lets you ditch the filler, which usually gets grease-logged anyway. And you can still get the crispness by sautéing bread crumbs in butter and then packing them onto the exterior of the cakes. The result is unadulterated crab *and* crunch.

EASY-BAKE CRAB CAKES

3 tbsp butter
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 cup panko bread crumbs
Kosher salt
Zest and juice of ½ lemon
½ cup mayonnaise
1 tbsp Dijon mustard
Hot-pepper sauce (optional; see right)
1 lb lump or jumbo lump crabmeat
1 tsp fish sauce
1 egg
Vegetable oil, to grease baking sheet
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley

1. Melt the butter with the garlic in a sauté pan over medium heat. When the garlic starts to take on color, add the bread crumbs. Stir constantly until they are a rich golden brown. Season with salt, and spread on a plate to cool.
2. Preheat oven to 350°. In a bowl, mix the lemon zest, mayonnaise, mustard, and hot-pepper sauce, if using. Gently fold in the crabmeat, and season with fish sauce and lemon juice. In a separate bowl, beat the egg with a pinch of salt, and fold into the crab mixture.
3. Lightly oil a baking sheet. On it, place four 1½ tbsp-size piles of bread crumbs, leaving plenty of space between each. Spoon the crab onto the 4 piles, dividing the meat evenly. Pat down to form cakes, and sprinkle more crumbs on top.
4. Bake for 20 minutes, or until the cakes are hot all the way through. With a wide spatula, remove each to a plate. Scatter more bread crumbs and the parsley on top, and serve.



HOT-PEPPER SAUCE

Add heat to your crab cakes — or any other dish — with a DIY hot sauce.

1 large red bell pepper
1 habanero pepper
Kosher salt and fresh pepper
3 cloves garlic, smashed
½ cup white-wine vinegar

SLICE THE PEPPERS THINLY

Discard stems and seeds, set the slices in a glass bowl, and add 2 tsp of salt plus a few grinds of pepper. Mash well and let sit for 1 hour.

BRINE THE PEPPERS

Make a brine by stirring 2 tsp of salt into 1 cup of

water. Add just enough brine to submerge the peppers, and weigh them down with a smaller, empty bowl. Cover all with a paper towel, and secure it with a rubber band. Let sit at room temperature for 5 to 7 days. Check it daily; if any white mold forms (this is normal), skim it off.

INFUSE THE VINEGAR

Place garlic and vinegar in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, then lower heat

to a simmer, cover, and cook for 15 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool entirely.

FINISH THE SAUCE

Pick the garlic from the vinegar and the peppers from the brine, reserving the liquid from each, and puree them together in a blender. Once smooth, add the vinegar and blend. Want more heat? Add a splash of pepper brine. For sweetness, add honey. The sauce will last for months in the fridge.

SUGAR RAY

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Brazil's Best-Kept Secret

Aged cachaça — South America's answer to rum — is finally arriving on the U.S. scene. Here's how to mix it into your summer cocktails. **by ST. JOHN FRIZELL**

IF THERE'S ONLY ONE THING you know about cachaça, it's probably this: The Brazilian spirit is the main ingredient in a caipirinha. In fact, few liquors are so strongly associated with their flagship cocktail. That's not necessarily a bad thing, as a caipirinha is damn delicious when done right and perfect for a late-summer affair. But just as tequila liberated itself from the margarita, cachaça is busting out on its own — and that's largely because we're just now getting the good stuff.

Brazil makes nearly a billion liters per year, but until recently 99 percent of it never left the country. Importers have caught on, and new bottles are showing up stateside, including many of the best aged varieties. Unlike whiskey and rum, which are matured in oak barrels, the most intriguing cachaças are rested in vats made from tropical hardwoods such as ipe or amburana. What emerges is a deep and complex spirit with an exotic overtone. If only all of our summer flings aged as well.

CAIPIRINHA

*¾ lime, cut into pieces
2 to 3 tsp raw sugar
2 oz unaged cachaça*

Muddle lime and sugar in a rocks glass. Add cachaça, and fill glass with ice. Top with a cocktail shaker, and shake well.

PEQUENO PONCHE

*2 oz aged cachaça
1 barspoon cane syrup
1 lime wedge*

Pour cachaça and cane syrup into a rocks glass and stir. Add ice, squeeze the lime into the drink, and drop in the lime wedge. Stir.

LA ARMADORA

*2 oz cachaça
¾ oz grapefruit juice
½ oz lime juice
½ oz simple syrup
1 barspoon Ricard
(or other pastis,
such as Pernod)
Pinch of salt
Club soda*

Add first 6 ingredients to shaker, and shake well with ice. Strain into an ice-filled highball glass and top with a splash of club soda. Garnish with a ribbon of grapefruit peel.

THREE TOP CACHAÇAS

Avuá Amburana, \$50

Aged in 15-foot-tall casks made of exotic amburana wood, it surprises with flavors of cinnamon, coffee cake, and banana.



Leblon Seleção Verde, \$25

With minimal aging, this still-strength (90 proof) spirit manages to be buttery and smooth, with a faint scent of cut grass.



Novo Fogo Barrel-Aged, \$42

This extremely mellow cachaça is like a fine Jamaican rum, with notes of baked pineapple, clove, and tropical fruit.



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STYLE & DESIGN

Decoding Jeans: Rules of the New Denim

For the best fit, fade, and durability, go with selvedge jeans. Here's how to find your perfect pair.

by **DEREK WONG**

BUYING JEANS USED to be simple — know your waist, length, and whether you wanted them to fit over your cowboy boots. But in recent years, selvedge denim, a higher quality and more durable fabric, has escaped the confines of specialty stores (and their \$500 price tags) and is now available everywhere — even Gap sells a \$100 pair. Which is great. They're stronger, break in to a perfect fit, and have those deep, natural fades. But navigating the options can be overwhelming: selecting the cut, finding your fit with the initially stiffer fabric, and ensuring that you don't shrink them in the wash. "Selvedge denim looks better with wear," says Victor Lytvinenko, co-founder of Raleigh Denim. "It costs more, but you're getting more for your money." Here's how to spend it wisely and get the right pair.

RAW

Any denim that hasn't been predistressed, prewashed, or otherwise processed.

RULE 1

Buy Snug

Selvedge denim stretches with time, so buy a slim straight-cut pair a size smaller than usual. "You want a pair that's a bit snug at first in the waist," says Paul O'Neill, senior designer at Levi's Vintage

Clothing. Find jeans with just enough room to squeeze a finger between your body and the waistband. "That way, they'll stretch to the perfect size after a few weeks of wear." As you break

them in, the patterns will fade along your body's contours to create a worn look unattainable with regular jeans — especially if you resist washing them for a few months. *(continued on page 40)*

SELVEDGE

Denim that has been woven on shuttle looms, resulting in a fabric with a closed edge that is less likely to fray. You can tell if a pair of jeans has been made from selvedge denim by turning the legs inside out and looking for two densely woven white bands running up the fabric's vertical edge.

Levi's Made & Crafted Thumb Tack jeans; \$169

An aerial, high-angle photograph of the New York City skyline at dusk. The image captures a dense cluster of skyscrapers, with many windows glowing with warm interior lights. The Empire State Building is prominent on the right side, and the Chrysler Building is visible on the left. In the background, the Hudson River and the New York Harbor are visible, with the Manhattan Bridge and other bridges spanning the water. The sky is a deep blue, and the overall atmosphere is one of a bustling, resilient city.

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RULE 2

Know Your Weight

Denim is measured in ounces per yard, and can range from as light as eight ounces to as heavy as 32. Weight doesn't affect price much but can affect comfort. "Lightweight jeans are more comfortable during the summer," says David Shuck, managing editor of the Rawr Denim website. "But heavier ones can last longer and give you sharper contrast fades." Buy midweight jeans made from an 11- to 14-ounce cotton; they're ideal for year-round wear and still give sharp fades.

RULE 3

Don't Be Afraid to Cuff

"I wear mine plain during the wintertime but will roll them up twice with a one-inch cuff during the summer," Lytvinenko says. "It allows the breeze to blow through." Cuffing also allows you to show the jeans' distinctive line of selvedge — the pop of textured fabric can add a little extra contrast to your look. When rolling, have the cuff end just above your ankles.

RULE 4

Wash Rarely

Wear your jeans hard and as long as possible before washing. When washed, the fabric loses its indigo dye — resulting in less of the high-contrast fades you want from natural wear. When you do clean your jeans, turn them inside out and put them in a cold wash with gentle detergent. Don't machine dry: It can shrink the fabric and fade color.



1

RALEIGH DENIM MARTIN — ORIGINAL SELVEDGE RAW (\$285)

Raleigh Denim makes jeans in small batches in North Carolina. The slim-tapered, handcrafted pants are made from a midweight, 12.5-ounce denim.

2

GAP 1969 SKINNY FIT SELVEDGE (\$108)

These Gap jeans offer premium construction at an affordable price. The cotton-poly blend keeps the slim leg-line comfortable, while the waistband is constructed from heavier threads for added durability.

3

DENIM & SUPPLY RALPH LAUREN (\$185)

These are made from a 13.75-ounce selvedge denim washed in a resin rinse to maintain the deep indigo. The slim silhouette works for any occasion — pair them with a tie for the office.

4

J.CREW 770 JEANS IN RAW SELVEDGE (\$175)

Made with Japanese denim, these jeans are rougher in appearance and feel than U.S.-denim ones. The fabric, woven from more-textured yarns, yields greater variation in its fades.

5

BALDWIN DENIM & COLLECTION THE STEVEN (\$275)

These 12-ounce, Japanese-milled jeans are cold rinsed to soften the cotton-blend denim without losing any color. The result is a close, tailored fit that never feels too constricting.



THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN \$100 AND \$300 JEANS?

Higher-priced selvedge jeans tend to come from the U.S. and Japan — Raleigh Denim's jeans are 100 percent made in North Carolina with vintage sewing machines — and can feel more distinctive than their mass-produced competition from China (despite roughly identical manufacturing processes). More-expensive jeans may also have unique details like aged iron rivets and may use denim with a unique texture or weave. (In 2011 the Japanese brand Momotaro sold a pair of handwoven jeans for \$2,000; the premium was due to the use of a loom traditionally tasked with making kimonos.) But in terms of fit, comfort, and durability, the extra money doesn't necessarily pay off. "For your first pair of selvedge jeans, I recommend getting something that's affordable," says Shuck. "A lot of the higher-end stuff comes with detailing that only enthusiasts care about."

Billy Reid Slim Jean 6 Months Worn; \$245

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ESSAY

Not the Man I Used to Be

Rage against the natural hormonal decline, or accept the new, tamer you?

by TIM KREIDER

FROM AGE 18 on, my official policy regarding sex was: Yes. All my decisions in this area were governed by the deprived 14-year-old within, to whom the concept that any woman would willingly get naked in his presence was still literally incredible, too good to be true, a once-in-a-lifetime chance like getting sent into space or accidentally being elected president. Even after I'd amassed enough regrettable experience — doomed affairs and heartbreak, nonconsensual cohabitation, a lot of awkward small talk — to know that some women were better avoided, this adolescent maniac still dictated my actions. Passing up any sexual possibility still felt insane, like crawling past an oasis in the desert in search of a better one.

I'm now 48, and sexual opportunities still occasionally present themselves. And yet in recent years, to my 14-year-old self's astonishment and disgust, I sometimes find I just can't be bothered. Last year I received a text from a woman in Virginia inviting me to come down for the weekend, accompanied by persuasive visual allurements. I checked the Amtrak schedules and learned that, incredibly, it would take eight hours, including an unavoidable five-hour layover in D.C. I decided: Forget it. No sex is worth an afternoon in Union Station. Now, of course, I regret it.

My male friends and I — gentle, friendly, bookish cartoonists, coders, and physicists — sometimes reminisce about being 18 and driving a thousand miles for a night with a girl, or picking fights we had no business picking. “You guys?” our girlfriends and wives ask, looking at us, incredulous. Yes, even us.



Our weird mix of mortification and nostalgia is hard to explain. It's not the libido or aggression that we miss so much as the invincible boneheaded confidence of youth. “Everyone else was an idiot,” my friend Nick remembers. “I was going to explain it all to them.” We were as yet unsmushed by life and still figured we had as good a shot as the next guy at everything: every girl, any fight, fame, success, conquering the world. We kind of miss those guys.

It would be shortsighted to dismiss testosterone as fuel for nothing more useful than one-night stands and bar fights. Much of human history was written in testosterone. And while it does enable us to march, en masse, Over There and kill those Other Guys, and plunder their women, and take all their stuff, it also makes men undertake such pointless and hubristic projects as building the Tower of Babel and the Pharos of Alexandria, the Eiffel Tower and the

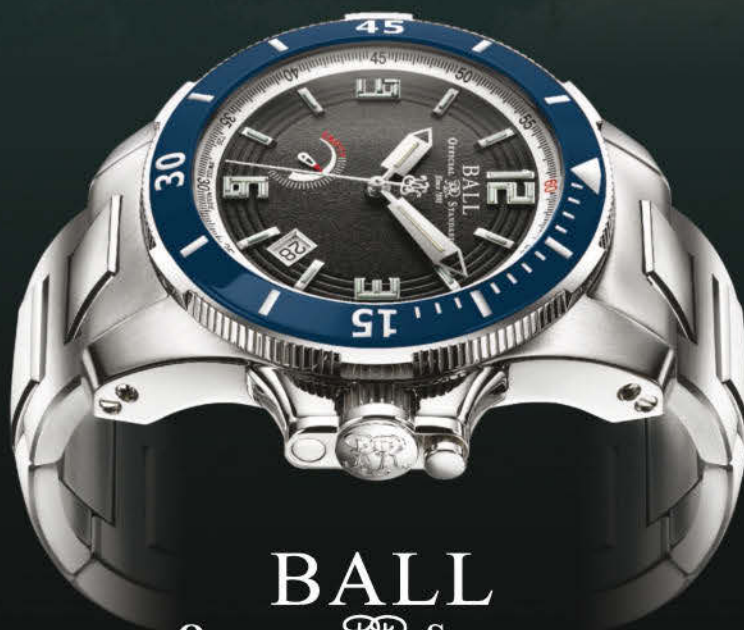
ALTHOUGH HE HAS REACHED SUMMIT AFTER SUMMIT, HE'S STILL CHASING HIS PEAK.

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Empire State Building — erecting all those colossal limestone and iron phalluses, wagging them at the face of God. Or for that matter, exterminating polio, stamping all over the face of the moon, and prying open the intricate mystery of the genome — unveiling and defiling Mother Nature. You could argue that history has all been one long macho drama, played out with cannons and flagpoles and Saturn Vs.

I remember reading, in one of those self-help books they sell in wire racks at highway rest stops, that women often find it a relief when their husband's testosterone begins to ebb in midlife. No more closing down the bars, lipstick on the collar, etc. Their man becomes — after all those years of unruly wildness — domesticated. I read this with a shudder. No one wants to be tamed. In one of the Socratic dialogues, a man is quoted to the effect that being relieved of his libido was like finally being allowed to dismount a wild horse. To me, it seems more like getting kicked off a train in Nebraska.

We experience the ebbing of testosterone not just as a lessening of libido but as a lessening of desire in general, a loss of certitude, of pleasure, and of will. We wonder what the hell ever happened to the old Us. We don't seem to enjoy anything as much as we used to. I'm neither as angry nor as hilarious as I used to be. It's not as if you can gently excise a man's belligerence and lechery and salvage a perfect gentleman. It'd be like extracting Hyde from Jekyll. What remained would be a shrunken, pallid thing, weak and ineffectual.

Time magazine has branded the ebbing of testosterone “manopause.” As with all maladies real and invented, there is a chemical solution, in the form of testosterone supplements, currently a multibillion-dollar business. Although they've been linked to heart attacks and strokes, it seems as if a lot of men's informed risk assessment is: Screw it. I myself still prefer more traditional remedies. These, unfortunately, are not without their own side effects: Dating girls in their twenties, for instance, is like dating escaped mental patients; my moderation in alcohol is now enforced by draconian hangovers; and sports cars are boring. Whenever I see a gray-haired dude in a convertible the color of Peter Pan's booties, I always think: “Sir, you embarrass us both.”

Maybe it's less a chemical problem than an existential one. Maybe I'm just tired. Maybe I've had enough. Maybe you can get what you thought you wanted only so many times before it loses its allure. There's a lag time — sometimes of years — between changing and noticing that you've changed. At some point you realize there's a difference

MAYBE IT'S LESS A CHEMICAL PROBLEM THAN AN EXISTENTIAL ONE. MAYBE I'M TIRED. MAYBE YOU CAN GET WHAT YOU THOUGHT YOU WANTED ONLY SO MANY TIMES BEFORE IT LOSES ITS ALLURE.

between what you want to want and what you actually want. In my thirties, it took me about 300 trials to realize that I didn't like smoking marijuana — that it always, 100 percent of the time, made me nervous and sad. And it's taken me the better part of a decade to notice that I don't always want to have sex or have another round, that sometimes I would rather stay home watching a movie with the cat on my lap.

Let's not confuse this with wisdom, let alone virtue. Some of it may be the cumulative effect of experience: Sex has come, through long Pavlovian conditioning, to be associated with regret, so that now I'm already imagining the breakup talk before we've gotten to the first kiss. Mostly it's just that the cost-benefit calculus has changed: My dread of hangovers and small talk outweighs my anticipation of the buzz and the fucking. I guess it's a relief, not feeling hormonally compelled to ride the train all day to slap nakedly with some stranger. But what I did instead of taking the train to Virginia that weekend was to sit on the couch, eating leftover taco meat right out of the frying pan and talking on the phone to my friend Harold, who had dozed off in his recliner while watching *Body Heat*, with a plate of uneaten salami on his stomach. It's not as if we've traded the shallow pleasures of the flesh for the consolations of philosophy.

“Maybe,” a female friend suggested to me, I'm sure in the least judgmental tone she could manage, “this stage of life has different pleasures to offer.” What are those, exactly? Catching up on all that Dostoyevsky that was too boring to get through when I was 20? *Golf*? I know I'm supposed to accept the ebbing of testosterone as inevitable, even welcome, and that I shouldn't want to trade my hard-won wisdom for the impulsive passions of youth. But the truth is, what little I've learned in this life has occasioned me

mostly melancholy and regret: I've learned that love is a lure and an illusion; that success brings no real satisfaction; that we ultimately lose whatever wisdom we've managed to acquire and end up incoherent, incontinent, and alone. I would gratefully trade these unwelcome insights to have my hands free of arthritis again, to have Koren or Bianca or Zoey back in bed for one night or two, or to get to sit around with all my friends, including those now deceased, in the back room at Cox's Pub for a long afternoon, cracking each other up and ordering another round of shots and singing the Faces' “Ooh La La”: “I wish that I knew what I know now/When I was younger...”

Let me channel, for a moment, my own younger, more irascible self, still alive in there somewhere. It's bad enough that we're forced to endure our own lessening and dissolution; having to affect some cloying boosterism about it only makes it more insufferable. I find it a bracing consolation to admit that this aging is bullshit, a big rip-off, simply The Worst. I, for one, protest it. I'm a rage-against-the-dying-of-the-light kind of guy. But what if it's the rage that's dying?

It turns out that the loss of testosterone may not be natural or inevitable. One study suggests that it occurs only as a function of a general decline in health — that is, men who remain healthy and active don't experience it. At the end of a dark, frigid winter spent eating potato chips and watching Netflix in bed, I finally bought a new bike, started working outside in the sun, and at some point realized I'd stopped saying “Shit — this again” when I woke up every morning. Maybe I hadn't been declining; maybe I was just depressed. I found myself cracking my friends up over beers again, taking stupid risks in Manhattan traffic, and, for the first time in years, euphorically giddy over a woman who is guaranteed to break my heart. To quote my favorite triumph-of-the-human-spirit film: I was cured, all right.

This is probably only a temporary reprieve. But who's to say? When a female friend told me about taking an old, blind man for a walk who started stroking her arm in what she interpreted as an inappropriate way, she was outraged by his taking advantage of an act of charity. But I found myself secretly rooting for the guy. Where she saw male entitlement and aggression, I saw a cheering, indefatigable cluelessness. He was still out there, giving it the old college try! Women have it impressed upon them much earlier in life, and much more bluntly, that they've lost all sexual street value. Whereas I'm sure I will still be deluded, when I am 90, that the hottest candy stripper in my assisted-living facility is not just being nice to me, but actually likes me. That I still have a shot. ■

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Author Susan Casey
uncovers the secret
inner life of the ocean's
smartest species.

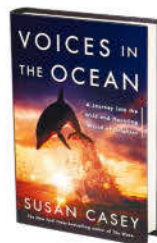
by MIKE RUBIN

AFTER WRITING two bestselling aquatic-themed books (*The Devil's Teeth*, about great white sharks, and *The Wave: In Pursuit of the Rogues, Freaks, and Giants of the Ocean*), Susan Casey already had cetaceans on her sonar when she had an encounter with a pod of about 50 spinner dolphins near her home in Maui. Swimming alongside them, she found that the creatures' "otherworldly" demeanor lifted her out of a depressive funk. Casey became obsessed with dolphins, spending two years researching her new book, *Voices in the Ocean: A Journey Into the Wild and Haunting World of Dolphins*, talking to scientists, visiting marine parks and illegal dolphin-trafficking markets — and even attending dolphin tele-transportation workshops.

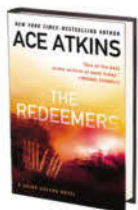
While Casey gives a sympathetic ear to New Age theorizing about dolphins' supposed supernatural powers, thankfully it's the scientific evidence she reveals that truly distinguishes *Voices in the Ocean*. "The thing that struck me the most is this notion of how their brains developed and for how long," says Casey about the mammal arguably closest to humans in intelligence and whose genome

is strikingly similar to our own. Humans have had our large brains for somewhere between 200,000 and 800,000 years; dolphins, however, have had theirs for about 35 million years. The neocortex in the dolphin brain (the area in the mammalian brain that allows us to reason, think, and socialize) has one less layer than in humans, so the way information enters and is processed is completely different. They also have an estimated three times more spindle-cell

"They take sociality to such a level that the group is a kind of a self," says Casey. "And that just totally blew my mind."



neurons — responsible for functions such as judgment, intuition, and awareness — than humans. And dolphins are one of the very few animals who can recognize themselves in a mirror, though their brain architecture suggests that their idea of self may be different from, and far more communal than, our own. "There may be a sense where they take sociality to such a level that the group is a kind of a self," says Casey. "And that just totally blew my mind." ■

THE DEEP
SOUTH'S
TRUE
DETECTIVE

In *The Redeemers*, the fifth installment in the Quinn Colson series by Ace Atkins, the former Army Ranger has lost his job as sheriff in hardscrabble Tibbehah County, Mississippi. But things move slowly in the Magnolia State — Colson still has his hands full fighting hoods who launder money through truck-stop strip joints and drive Econoline vans airbrushed with the likenesses of Alabama football greats. Based in Oxford, Mississippi, Atkins excels at capturing the region's lowlife dialogue while delving into its complex culture. "People who don't live here think the South is either *Gone With the Wind* or *Mississippi Burning*," Atkins says. "But it's really somewhere in between. There are some evil motherfuckers but also a lot of crossover in music, food, and white and black culture — it all makes good fodder."

Born in Alabama, Atkins grew up moving constantly as the son of an NFL coach, graced the cover of *Sports Illustrated* as a defensive end for the undefeated Auburn Tigers in 1993, and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize in 2000 for his newspaper crime reporting in Tampa. Now he writes bestselling mysteries. "Football was kind of pressed onto me, so what do you do but rebel and become a writer?" Atkins has a wayward son's wry outlook on the Deep South — he'd sworn off watching football after college until William Faulkner's niece recently took him to an Ole Miss game — that never rings false. "I ride along with local deputies for research," Atkins says, "but also spend time in the hunting and fishing section of Walmart — where I come away with 12 novels of material." —STAYTON BONNER



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Eating a T-bone can be part of a healthy diet —
if you stick to a few rules.

by JOSEPH HOOPER



THE NEW YORK TIMES recently ran an op-ed by well-known physician Dean Ornish, warning that the dietary evils of red meat are greater than we'd thought. "For reversing disease... a plant-based diet seems to be necessary," Ornish urged. One week later, in the same paper, a leading pediatrician argued the opposite — that not only is the case against red meat overblown, sound research shows it can even be healthy.

So which is it? Should you cut red meat from your diet? Or can you dig in to a steak without worrying that a trip to the cardiologist is right around the corner?

The answer: It depends on how much meat you eat. Red meat can be both good and bad. We know that it is one of nature's most efficient delivery systems for essential nutrients such as vitamin B and zinc. On the other hand, there's ample evidence suggesting that consuming red meat (beef, lamb, goat, and bison) in large quantities can lead to inflammation and chronic disease. And the jury is still out on how much saturated fat — which fattier cuts of meat have in abundance — you can eat and not pay a health cost.

Now we have a better idea of what constitutes the ideal amount. Every five years, the U.S. Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee,

a team of more than a dozen of the country's best minds in nutrition, combs through the latest data on healthy eating and delivers an updated set of rules. Last winter, the draft of its new report argued that red meat can be part of a healthy diet, provided that it is consumed in moderation. Moderation, according to Harvard professor of nutrition and committee member Frank Hu, means no more than 16 ounces a week. That's not a lot — only a four-ounce serving every other day. This would be a significant adjustment for most Americans, who consume an average of one to one-and-a-half servings of red meat daily. But consider the health payoff. Hu's study in

the *Archives of Internal Medicine* found that cutting daily red meat consumption to half a serving a day could lower the risk of dying of chronic disease by 10 percent.

It's worth noting that cleaving a good portion of red meat from your diet isn't going to hurt your protein levels, either. Yes, the body needs protein to build lean muscle, fuel a high metabolism, and keep you satiated. And beef is a great source of that protein. But chances are, you're probably getting more protein than you need already. Wayne Campbell, a professor of nutrition science at Purdue and another committee member, says of all the nutrition issues the team covered, "protein intake was the least of our concerns." Simply making a swap for poultry or fish will keep intake steady. Both have the same amount of protein as red meat.

Along with staying under a weekly portion quota, there are other ways to make eating meat nutritionally sound. We consulted the country's leading health experts to parse the latest clinical trials and research and to provide a simple set of guidelines. They aren't hard to follow. Especially when you know that sticking to them not only improves your own health, it supports more humane treatment of animals and comes with a lower environmental cost, too. Here's what to do:

CONSIDER THE SOURCE

Some nutritionists believe that grass-fed beef is less inflammatory and better for the heart and brain than the grain-fed variety. So always look for beef, or any type of meat, from "pastured" animals, which spend their lives grazing and consequently have high levels of healthy omega-3 fats. If that's not available, go for "grass fed." Those animals may have been raised in pens but at least were fed a grain-free diet. Beef labeled "organic" is antibiotic-free but can come from animals raised in pens and fed corn. At the bottom of the food chain are the factory-farmed products, which come from animals raised in pens, fattened with genetically modified grain feed, and shot full of antibiotics. (When in doubt, lamb is a good bet. Even if you buy it in a run-of-the-mill supermarket, lamb won't be factory-farmed, and the animal most likely grazed on grass.) The overarching goal should be to buy smaller quantities of higher-quality meat. Price should be a wash — you're paying more per ounce but consuming fewer ounces.

AVOID PROCESSED MEATS

Bacon, sausage, salami — these cured meats had the strongest toxic effect in Hu's study, reducing longevity twice as much as non-processed meat. Processing introduces more salt and saturated fat, Hu explains, as well as



**"I'D RATHER SEE
PEOPLE MAKE A
POSITIVE CHANGE BY
CUTTING BACK
ON JUNK FOOD."**

—Wayne Campbell, professor of nutrition science

A citrus marinade can help prevent carcinogenic compounds from forming in grilled steak.

nitrite preservatives, which the gut turns into potentially cancerous compounds. "Eat as little processed meat as possible," he says. "Not more than once or, at most, twice a week."

GO FOR VARIETY

Don't stress about the cut or type of red meat. "If you've done your due diligence on sourcing, then choosing the 'best' kind of meat mostly comes down to personal preference," says Kathie Swift, nutritionist and education director for Food As Medicine, a nutrition-training program for physicians. That's not to say all meat is the same. The saturated-fat content varies wildly, from six grams in a three-ounce serving of beef to three grams in the same amount of bison. But the new thinking in integrative medicine is that saturated fat from properly raised animals has positive health effects, especially for the brain. Mainstream researchers also accept that saturated fat isn't the villain we once thought it was — though they still note a correlation between high amounts of it and heart disease. The bottom line: Know yourself. If your weight, cholesterol levels, and blood pressure are fine, odds are your four ounces of short ribs aren't killing you. And if you're going to put a lot of thought into which type of meat to eat, choose outside the norm, says Seamus Mullen, chef-owner of New York City's Tertulia. He recommends organ meats such as liver and sweetbreads, which are dense in vitamins and minerals, and less-common cuts such as shank and shin for collagen, which may build and strengthen nails and hair.

BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU EAT IT WITH

A recent study from Tufts found that the

more red meat people ate, the more likely they were to gain weight. However, when people ate their red meat with more vegetables, rather than refined carbs, that weight gain was blunted. This serves as another reminder that if we must demonize a food, let it be white bread, french fries, and sugary drinks. "I'd rather see people make a positive change in their diet by cutting back on junk food," says Purdue's Wayne Campbell. "And not worry about whether their serving of meat is three or four ounces."

THINK OF MEAT AS A FLAVORING

Even the belief that meat must be the main dish on the plate is a *passé* way to cook and eat, says Mullen. He suggests pairing a few ounces of good beef with a thickly cut vegetable like eggplant or umami-rich portobello mushroom. Or slice your meat razor-thin over sautéed veggies, which makes four ounces seem to go a long way. Swift notes that soups, stews, and chilis are classic meat-stretchers. Combine meat with a chewy grain like barley in any of these, and you'll get the "mouth feel" of beef. Or use meat more as a flavoring, adding a few chunks to a slow-cooked meal that features a hearty vegetable like sweet potato.

COOK IT SLOW AND LOW

Bad news. That crusty, blackened char on an expertly grilled steak can contain a carcinogenic family of compounds called heterocyclic amines, or HCAs, which form when meat is cooked over high heat. As with processed meats, you should limit the charred beef you eat. Instead, embrace the slow-cooked meats — the osso buco, the six-hour brisket — which are just as delicious. ■

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YOUR BEST IS WITHIN REACH

Ramsey Bergeron
Triathlete



WHAT WORKS FOR ME

Eminem: The Home Body

He boxed, battled addiction, and ran like a hamster on a wheel until he found his fitness groove in front of the TV.



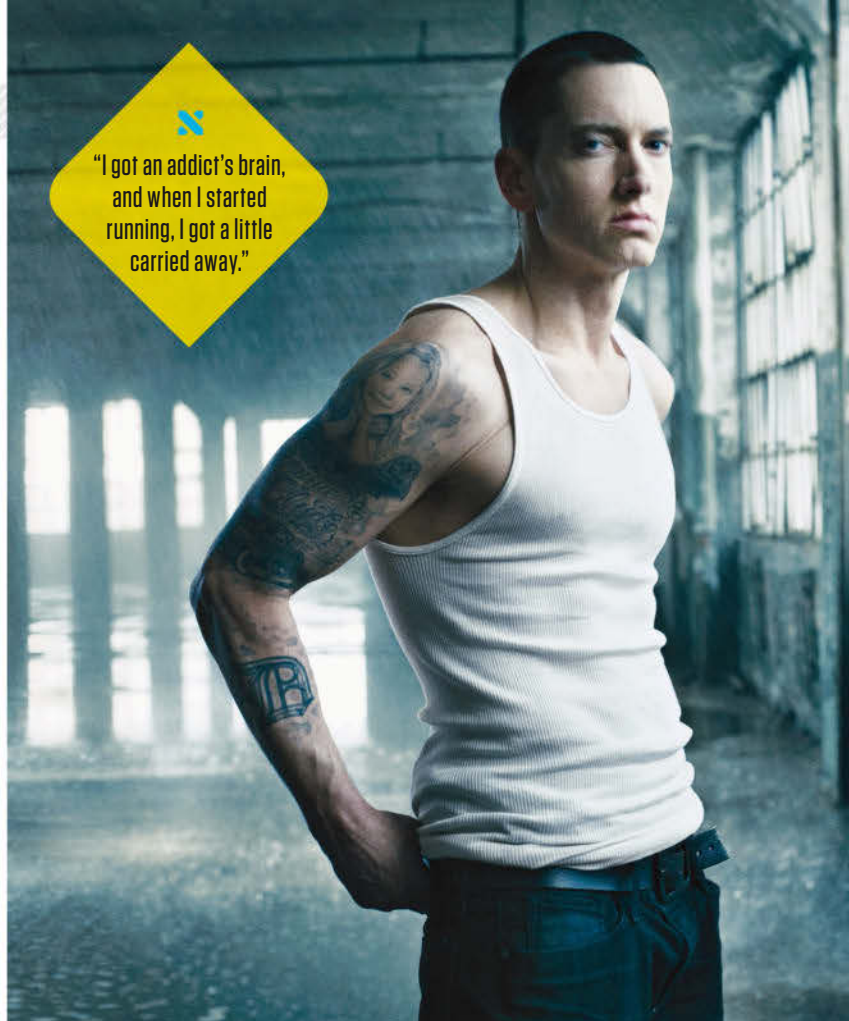
I'M NOT SURE EXACTLY when I finally got it. In the early days, I just went with the flow: If I could hit a gym, I'd hit up a

gym. If someone suggested a workout that seemed legit, I might try it, but it wasn't a priority. Everything has to work around the music. Still, I wanted to stay fit even if I never wanted to get big. I worked out with Dre a few times, and I had to lift the kiddie weights. I've always been more into cardio, because when I'm performing I have to keep my wind up. It's never cool to be out of breath — *anywhere*, doing *anything* — but especially onstage. So I ran and did regular sit-ups and push-ups. For a while I even got into boxing.

For close to a year, I worked with the late Emanuel Steward [who'd trained Thomas Hearns, Wladimir Klitschko, and others]. I wasn't doing so hot at the time, drinking a lot and taking pills, and Emanuel offered to come out to the house to train me, to motivate me. What am I going to say — no? He was incredible. He taught me fundamentals, the mechanics of boxing. A lot of basic shit I thought I knew, I didn't know. But I wasn't that motivated; I wasn't taking it too seriously. Once I got sober, that changed.

• Recovery = Running

In 2009, I overdosed on pills, and I went into the hospital. I was close to 230 pounds. I'm not sure how I got so big, but I have ideas. The coating on the Vicodin and the Valium I'd been taking for years leaves a hole in your stomach, so to avoid a stomachache, I was constantly eating — and eating badly.



"I got an addict's brain, and when I started running, I got a little carried away."

When I got out of rehab, I needed to lose weight, but I also needed to figure out a way to function sober. Unless I was blitzed out of my mind, I had trouble sleeping. So I started running. It gave me a natural endorphin high, but it also helped me sleep, so it was perfect. It's easy to understand how people replace addiction with exercise. One addiction for another but one that's good for them. I got an addict's brain, and when it came to running, I think I got a little carried away. I became a fucking hamster. Seventeen miles a day on a treadmill. I would get up in the morning, and before I went to the studio, I would run eight and a half miles in about an hour. Then I'd come home and run another eight and a half. I started getting OCD about the calories, making sure I burned 2,000 every day. In the end I got down to about 149 pounds. I ran to the point where I started to get injured. All the constant pounding from the running began to tear up my hip flexors.

• Mixing It Up

So when I was starting to dial back on the treadmill, I tried out some of those workout DVDs you do at home. One of the first ones was Shaun T's *Insanity* workout. I know a lot of these DVD guys are wacky, but I'm alone in my gym; I need someone on the TV yelling to motivate me. Besides, some of this shit is entertaining.

When I first started the *Insanity* workout, I alternated my routine, running one day and doing the *Insanity* the other. Then I stopped running altogether because it was too much to do them both. The *Insanity* won. After a while I started plateauing on that, so I mixed it up. I did the P90X for a little while (and I still do that ab workout because it's the most challenging), but then I moved on to the *Beast*.

Now every morning before I go to the studio, I do the *Body Beast* workout with free weights, bench, and pullup bar at home. It's just me, so it helps that the *Body Beast* dude is over-the-top. The routine is pretty intense, too. The first time I did the legs, I couldn't walk for two days. Now I'm doing arms one day, chest the next day, legs the next, and I'm still functioning throughout the day. And I can finally do it without pausing the DVD.

I still hate pullups. They're a mother-fucker, but I do them. I even fill out the log afterward. I guess I'm pretty compulsive working out. I feel like if I step away from it for too long, if I have a crazy week and take a five-day break, it'll be like starting over. I'm afraid that if it goes beyond that, I might lose the motivation. Once you're at a place where you've made progress and you've got some time invested in it, you don't wanna quit and give up what you started.

—AS TOLD TO MARK HEALY



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What's Really Making You Fat

Author Mark Schatzker explains why chemical flavoring in our food — not fat or carbs — is the enemy. *by* JOE LEVY



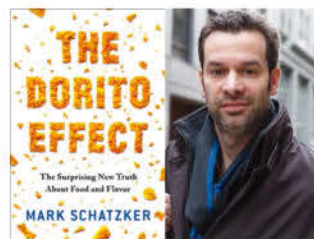
WE'RE TURNING REAL food into junk food. As journalist Mark Schatzker explains in *The Dorito Effect: The Surprising New Truth About Food and Flavor*, Big Agriculture has produced tomatoes that last forever and Franken chickens that are full-grown six weeks after they hatch — and all taste so bland we need to dump on spices to make them edible. During three-plus years of research, Schatzker learned that as taste has evaporated, so has nutrition. Man-made flavors mimic flavors found in nature, chemically printing desire onto food that we normally wouldn't eat and fooling our bodies into believing we're getting nutrition that isn't there. This, Schatzker argues, is what's really driving the obesity epidemic. Fortunately, he also thinks it's not too late to retrain our palates.

In your first book, *Steak: One Man's Search for the World's Tastiest Piece of Beef*, you're in Texas eating a rib-eye so bland that you have to slather it with steak sauce. Is this the Dorito effect? Exactly. This applies broadly to all foods, but two of the best examples are tomatoes

and chicken. They've been getting diluted nutritionally, and they don't taste as good as they used to. Chicken, a relatively rare meat at one time, we've managed to make cheap and ubiquitous, but it tastes like cardboard.

And to coax us into eating these foods, manufacturers pack them with synthetic flavors.

That's the other side of this coin — flavor technology. We had a very limited ability to create flavor until the 1950s. One of the first things we successfully added it to was tortilla chips — Doritos — to make them taste like tacos. We used to add flavor to just junk food — potato chips, soft drinks. Now walk through the supermarket and you'll be blown away. You can find a whole chicken and in the ingredient panel see “natural flavor.” You see it with pork, and you see it with beef. Everything's becoming more like that original Dorito.



You mean my water with “natural lemon flavor” might not be as natural as I think?

It might not even say “lemon.” The term *natural* refers to how it was made, not what it is. Natural flavorings and artificial flavorings are chemically identical. You can isolate 15 different chemical compounds from different “natural” sources — tree bark, yeast, lawn clippings — and blend them to create a flavoring that tastes like strawberry. But it will have no strawberry in it, and none of the antioxidants, vitamins, fiber, or minerals. It's just the *experience* of strawberry.

What impact do fake flavorings have?

They fool you. They make food you wouldn't normally eat taste more real and delicious.

You dub it “flavor goggles” in the book: something that makes us crave real food less. Is this America's actual diet problem?

Those nutritional bogeymen we go after — fat, carbs, there's a rotating cast — have a physiological effect. Eat a lot of fat, a lot of carbs, and you're going to gain weight. But in 1960, before we had an obesity problem, all those things existed. What changed? Did we suddenly lose willpower? We have to look at what controls our desire to eat — that's where flavor comes in. Flavors are an indicator of nutrients. When we take flavors and slice them off the nutrition that they signal — I call it nutritional decapitation — we create food that tells us a thrilling but deceptive lie. Bring it back to carbs: Who would overindulge in crackers and potato chips if they weren't flavored?

So what can we do?

Eat real food that tastes good. Check out the farmers market. Buy tomatoes that cost a bit more — they taste better. We're cheapskates when it comes to food. We buy nice clothes, want a nicer house, but we think food should be as cheap as possible. And read ingredient labels. If you see artificial or natural flavorings, that flavor has been engineered by somebody, not by nature, and you're getting an experience of nutrition that's not backed up.

One more thing on flavor degradation: If corn doesn't taste like corn anymore, what does that mean for my evening glass of bourbon?

Well, whiskeys get a tremendous amount of flavor from the barrels they were aged in. I don't think there's been flavor degradation in barrels, because we haven't screwed up oak the way we've screwed up corn. ■



ON NEWSSTANDS NOW

Also available at bn.com/rskeithrichards.

Ask Dr. Bob

Our in-house doc answers your questions about health, fitness, and living adventurously.



EAT YOUR VEGETABLES

At lunch, should I forgo a side of veggies with my sandwich so I have fewer calories to burn off during a workout later?

Don't do it. For one thing, vegetables are packed with fiber, which will help you feel full longer and keep your blood glucose levels in check — meaning you will be less likely to have a blood sugar crash late in the afternoon. What's more, veggies (and fresh fruit) provide this benefit while adding only minimal calories. Consider the results of a 2004 nutritional study of eating patterns of native Hawaiians. Researchers asked subjects to revert to their ancestral high-fiber, fruit, and vegetable diet. The Hawaiians ate more — about 4.1 pounds a day — compared with what they had been consuming (about 3.6 pounds a day). But the subjects lost significant amounts of weight while lowering their blood sugar levels. Bottom line? Say yes to the side salad.

TOOTH PROTECTION

I've heard that I shouldn't brush my teeth right after drinking my morning coffee. Anything to this?

Yes. Brushing immediately after drinking anything acidic — coffee, juices, lemonade — hurts teeth more than it helps. That's because the acids in drinks cling to your tooth enamel and temporarily soften it. Brushing will grind those acids deeper into teeth, causing enamel to erode and leading to cavities down the road. Wait at least 30 minutes after drinking coffee to brush — and if you want to get rid of coffee breath in the meantime, swish water and chew a stick of sugar-free gum.

INJURY-PROOF YOUR BODY

After a rotator cuff tear a few years back, I've been worried about hurting my shoulder again. Any protective exercises you suggest?

I feel your pain — literally. Last month, I injured my left shoulder while pushing too hard during a standup paddleboarding race. The strengthening exercises I do now will double as preventative care to help you remain injury-free. First, build the big muscles that support and protect the shoulder, starting with the lats. (Regular sets of pull-ups and rows are a great way to do this.) Then target the small rotator cuff muscles from all directions: Do front, lateral, and cross-body raises with a light weight. Finally, stretch the muscles in your shoulder regularly with yoga poses like Downward Dog and Child's Pose.



NUTRITION MYTHS

Is it healthier to eat spinach or tomato pastas versus the conventional white pasta?

Yes, as long as the pasta is made with whole grains and actual vegetables. Look for the black-and-gold WHOLE GRAIN stamp from the nonprofit Whole Grains Council, and double-check that the ingredient list has vegetables listed near the top. (Many products use only trace amounts of veggies to add color to white-flour pasta.) And when you cook it, follow the al dente instructions on the packaging. Not only does mushy pasta taste lousy, it also has a higher glycemic index, which is more likely to spike blood sugar.

TIME-SAVING WORKOUTS

What's the best way to get cardio and strength training if you're short on time?

In 2013, I was in Africa, preparing to launch a humanitarian mission into South Sudan, and in the hotel gym I developed a speedy super-set workout that I still use today. It requires training opposing muscle groups, with little rest between sets to get your heart rate up — a technique that builds strength faster and burns more calories than traditional routines. Start with the bench press, then immediately do bent-over rows. Wait one minute, then do squats and hamstring curls. After another minute, do chin-ups and triceps extensions. Do this sequence three times total. You'll be done in less than 30 minutes.

THE DOC IS ONLINE Email your questions for Dr. Bob Arnot to dr.bob@mensjournal.com.

TO-DO LIST

The health and fitness products, books, apps, or gear worth checking out this month.



ORANGE MUD MODULAR GYM BAG

This large tote is made of durable ballistic nylon (the material developed for use in fighter pilot flak jackets) and includes removable compartments for sneakers and wet clothes. It also has a half-dozen storage pockets, so you won't have any trouble keeping stuff organized. \$170; orangemud.com



SPARROW TRUE ESSENTIAL OIL

This is the only product you need when on the road or at the gym. The organic formula blends 12 essential oils and works as an aftershave to prevent irritated skin, a cleanser in place of soap, and a moisturizer. With a spicy blood-orange scent, it's a great cologne, too. \$88; sparrowforeveryone.com

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ON NEWSSTANDS NOW

Health News

This month's most important research discoveries, updates, and advice.

Eat More Nuts!



A handful a day of peanuts, almonds, or cashews can

significantly lower your risk of heart disease, cancer, and even brain diseases like Alzheimer's, according to a survey of more than 120,000 adults. Nuts may be the healthiest food you can eat, says Jennifer McDaniel, a dietitian with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: "They have ample mono- and polyunsaturated fats and are rich in antioxidants, fiber, and heart-healthy potassium and plant phytosterols."

She adds that nuts' anti-inflammatory properties help protect the brain, which could explain the strong decrease in risk of cognitive diseases in those who eat them. Any kind of nut provides these health benefits; just be sure to stick to a small handful (about a dozen) daily. —M.J.



Coffee Can Prevent ED Risk

Men who drink two to three cups of coffee a day are a third less likely to experience erectile dysfunction, a new report has found. While we typically think of coffee as having an energizing effect, research suggests that caffeine may help relax the muscle tissues in the penis, enhancing blood flow, explains Robert Mordkin, chief of urology at Virginia Hospital Center and *Men's Journal* contributor. Not a coffee drinker? Substitute green tea. Both are effective, study authors say. —ALLISON FOX



**FACT
— OR —
FICTION**

To build strength, lift heavier weights.

FICTION As long as you do enough reps, nearly all weights yield the same strengthening results. In other words, curling a 15-pound dumbbell 20 times can build as much muscle as curling a 50-pounder five times. "The key is working to fatigue, regardless of how you get there," says Stuart Phillips, a kinesiology professor at McMaster University in Ontario. "If you hit the gym to stay strong and healthy, you can lift lighter weights to fatigue and still gain strength." That goes for body-weight moves like push-ups and pull-ups, too. You can make these exercises just as effective as barbell work — just make sure to keep going until you max out. —M.J.



Run Faster to Save Your Knees



Picking up the pace on your next run may spare you a knee injury down the road. In a new Danish study, recreational runners who ran 10 miles per hour versus a slow jog of five miles per hour put 80 percent less stress on their knees. "Although running faster increases the load on your knee with each step, you take longer strides, so you need fewer steps to cover a certain distance," says study author Jesper Petersen, a researcher at Aarhus University in Denmark. "This lowers the cumulative load at the joint." But you don't need to turn every run into a sprint. "The best advice for runners who've been dealing with knee pain — or for anyone who's trying to avoid it — is to run a little bit faster and, at the same time, run a slightly shorter distance," Petersen says. So if you typically do four miles at an easy jog, slice it to three and kick up the speed. —MELAINA JUNTITI

DON'T GET THIS SURGERY Arthroscopic surgery for knee arthritis, a common approach, provides no long-term benefits, according to a new study of patients age 40 and up. After six months, those who'd undergone the procedure suffered just as much pain as those who hadn't, the report found. For those with nagging knee pain not caused by an acute injury, "I recommend physical therapy, exercise, and weight loss as the first line of treatment," says lead researcher Jonas Bloch Thorlund. —M.J.

Do this to protect knees Daily foam rolling and squats help prevent knees from becoming arthritic, says physical therapist David Reavy. Roll along the sides of your legs to ease tension in the muscles that support the knee. Then strengthen them with two sets of 15 squats. Place your weight on your toes for the first set; move it to your heels for the next set. —M.J.

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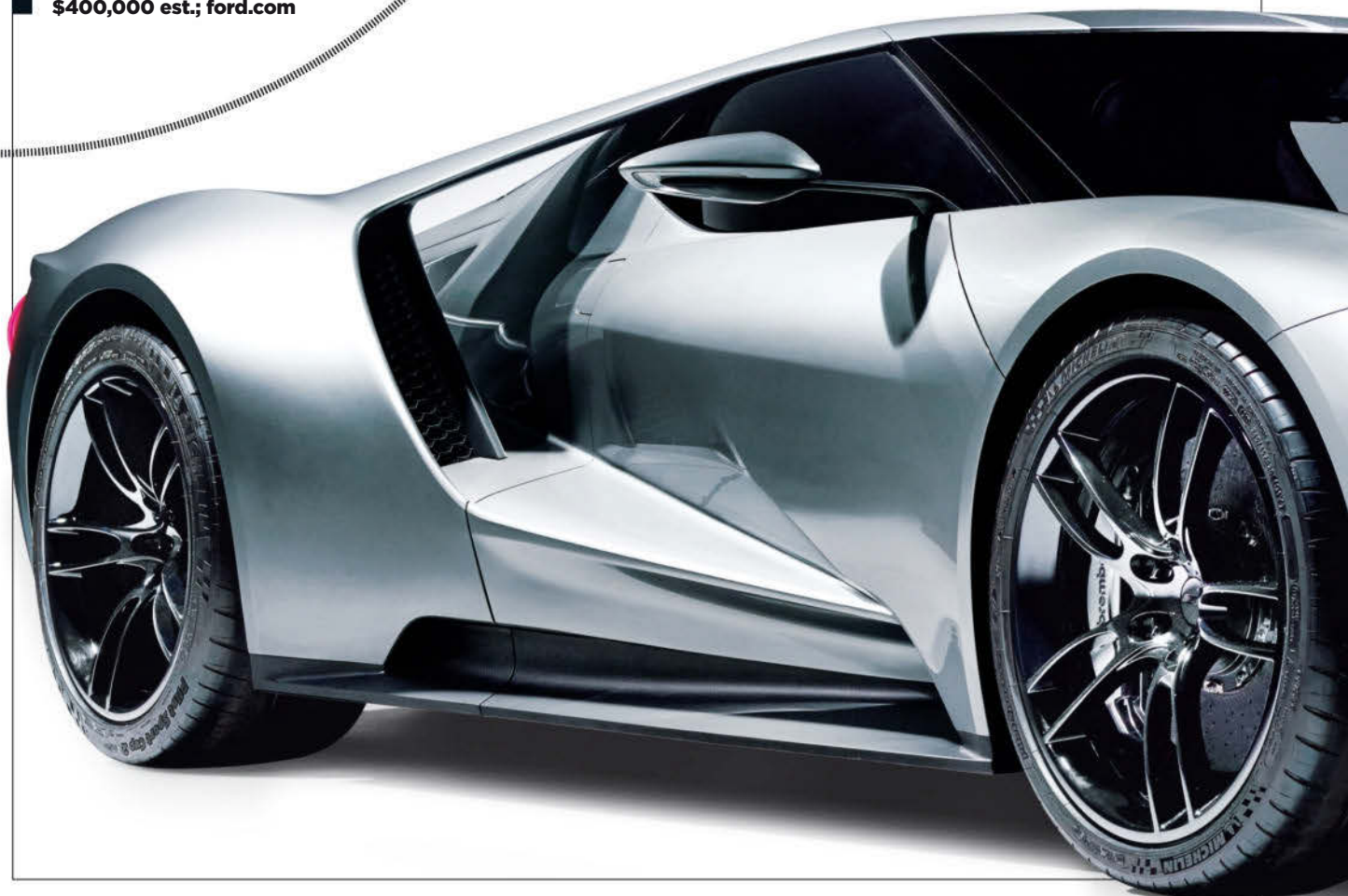
In 1966 Ford shocked the world with a win at Le Mans. Fifty years later, it's planning to do it again, with a \$400,000 supercar you'll be able to order from your local showroom. The **Ford GT**'s narrow shape plays on nostalgia — its shrink-wrapped style echoes that of the Ferrari-crushing 1965 GT40 — but its execution is almost futuristic, with each aerodynamic flourish perfected through computer modeling and wind-tunnel testing to increase downforce and kill drag. "You immediately recognize this as a Ford GT, but it's an ultramodern interpretation," says Ford product boss Raj Nair. Although it will have a production run of just several hundred, the GT will impact more than its lucky owners; expect much of the tech — from its lightweight composite components to its compact but efficient engine — to trickle down to more-attainable models in the months and years to come.

\$400,000 est.; ford.com



A BODY BUILT FOR SPEED

Two "buttresses" connect the cockpit and rear haunches, giving the car a sculptural presence like nothing else in autodom. But they're not just a treat for the eye: The winglike structures force air downward, and the hollows feed it to the engine's intercoolers. Also innovative: Exhaust departs through pipes concealed in the middle of the taillights. "We were designing space through the car rather than around the car," says Ford design director Chris Svensson.





A TIGHTER FIT

For better weight balance and increased efficiency, the GT's hourglass figure allows no extraneous space. The driver and passenger sit hip-to-hip on seats that are fused to the chassis; most of the car's controls are mounted on the wheel, F1-style. The car's rear wraps around a 600-horsepower, twin-turbocharged V-6. "We wouldn't have been able to do it around a V-8," says Nair. The lighter engine allows for exceptional power-to-weight ratio in a production car.





THE LUXURIOUS FAMILY TRUCKSTER

Apart from its top-tier 400-horsepower hybrid powertrain, which leaves Volvos of yore in the dust, the **XC90** presents a master class in pared-down elegance (and increased interior space). “We’ve really cleaned up the cabin, and you pay much more attention to the elements that are left: natural wood, crystal, leather,” says Thomas Ingenlath, Volvo’s SVP of design. On top of seven full-size seats (the five in the rear collapse independently and lie flat for hauling cargo), there’s an array of safety breakthroughs that should help dial down the stress of shuttling the family around. One feature takes over braking if the driver accidentally turns into the path of an oncoming car, and another detects when the vehicle has run off the road and can prepare seats and belts for impact. **From \$49,825; volvocars.com/us**



The Highbrow Speed Demon

Though the **Cadillac CTS-V** sedan is a mild-mannered everyday driver, nearly every part of this high-performance car is subtly tweaked for zero-to-60 bragging rights. Vents in the carbon-fiber hood suck the car to the ground; wide fenders permit bigger, stickier tires; and massive openings up front feed air to the engine’s superchargers. Of course, that engine is one not-so-subtle change: The 6.2-liter supercharged V-8, borrowed from the Corvette, makes a ridiculous 640 horsepower. The result is the most assuredly capable sedan America has ever built. **From \$84,990; cadillac.com**



UP NEXT: THE PERSONALIZED INSTRUMENT PANEL

The litany of tech that’s entered car cabins — from GPS-guided navigation to an infinite array of audio streams — has saved us from getting lost or bored (most of the time). But controlling it often means tilting your head down and to the side — away from the road. Enter **Audi’s virtual cockpit**, rolling out now on the TT coupe. (A version of the system first appeared last year on the Lamborghini Huracán; future Audis will also offer the tech.) The 12.3-inch-wide panel can display everything from vivid 3-D maps to the car’s back-up camera to phone and media controls — quickly and easily viewable through the steering wheel. Since it’s all digital, you can choose what takes priority, minimizing your instrument dials in favor of more real estate for the map, say. It’s clear, quick, logical — and cool. **TT from \$42,900; audiusa.com**



Honda Gets a Hot Hatch

Honda hasn't been known to churn out extremely hot hatchbacks in more than a decade, but the **Civic Type-R**, currently being offered in Europe (with a version headed to the U.S. market), should put the Japanese manufacturer back in the good graces of fans of cheap speed. None of the 306-horsepower machine's modifications are for styling purposes alone: All are functional, from splitters to side struts to wheel vents, helping to keep the car cool, planted, and thrill-inducing. **Price TBD; honda.com**



THE RIGHT-SIZE TRUCK

The **Toyota Tacoma** pickup ("Taco" to its drivers) has reigned for years in the midsize truck category, despite carrying styling from the early aughts. A long-overdue redesign ratchets up its edge. "It's got a more muscular, chiseled form, from the big wheel flares to the hexagonal grill," says Kevin Hunter, president of Toyota's design studio. "We call it a 'high lift' image that suits its active outdoor purpose." With a new body built for adventure, the GoPro mount — a standard accessory in every trim — makes perfect sense. **Price TBD; toyota.com**

THE CAMARO GROWS UP

With a body that's more than 200 pounds lighter, the **2016 Chevrolet Camaro** should graduate from pony-car class into a field of true sports cars. Though taut and tightened, the high-shoulder look remains, now backed up with a stronger, stiffer chassis, the option of GM's sublime magnetic suspension, and an array of powertrain choices that includes a new turbocharged four-cylinder — in addition to a big 6.2-liter V-8, of course. **\$25,000 est.; chevrolet.com**





A Redesigned Roadster

Not only is the **Midual Type 1** visually stunning, but its powerplant is a unique longitudinally mounted flat-twin (normally it's horizontal) that allows for a shorter wheelbase, better handling, and a sleeker aluminum frame. The bespoke engine helps explain the staggering 180,000 hours of R&D that went into the bike. The pièce de résistance? The analog gauges atop the leather-wrapped body. **From \$160,000; midual.com**



THE SLEEKER CLASSIC

Indian Motorcycle's **2016 Chief Dark Horse** looks like the ne'er-do-well brother of the brand's iconic chrome-heavy Chief. "It's an attitude bike for sure," says Greg Brew, director of industrial design. Without all that shiny metal, the bike shed 27 pounds, making the Dark Horse, with its massive 1,811cc V-twin, the fastest Chief — and the most stylish. **From \$16,999; indianmotorcycle.com**

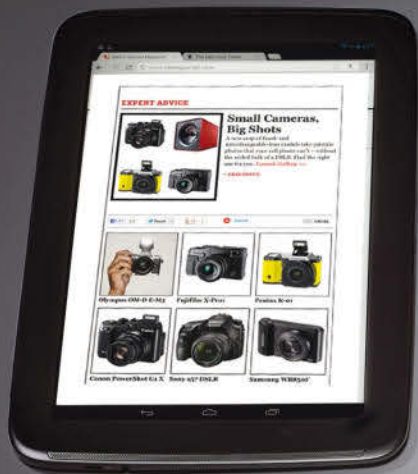


A MUSCLE BIKE WITH CLASS

Brawn and balance rarely inhabit the same body, but both coexist in the **Confederate X132 Hellcat Speedster**. Its gently arched carbon-fiber tank, delicately perched saddle, and exposed engine components are graceful, while the hulking 2,163cc V-twin, machined from a solid chunk of 6061 aluminum, is anything but. This is a love letter to the muscle bike. **From \$69,500; confederate.com**

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H O M E

THE
HANDS-
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OVER

The iconic one-piece Chemex glass carafe is nearly 75 years old and considered by coffee connoisseurs to be the best way to brew. But the pour-over method is tedious. Even Adams Grassy, whose family acquired the company in 1981, admits that it makes “people reluctant to use the Chemex.” The solution is the **Ottomatic**, an automated version of the classic: Water heats up and then rains over the coffee grounds in a pattern that replicates the laborious “bloom, pour, pause, and pour” method and creates that perfect cup — hands-free. **\$350; chemexcoffee.com**

The heart of the Ottomatic is the precision heat element that regulates water temperature (between 197.6 and 204.8 degrees), but the soul is the borosilicate glass carafe with its wood collar and leather tie.

PROP STYLING BY WENDY SCHELAH FOR HALLEY RESOURCES



ART THAT ADAPTS TO YOUR MOOD

The digital **Depict Frame** will shake up the way we view art at home. Its 50-inch 4K display inside a maple frame delivers crisp images with pixels that are imperceptible to the naked eye, while an innovative subscription service offers a curated supply of works from emerging and established digital artists. **\$1,800; depict.com**



THE CUSTOM DRINK-MAKER

The sleek **Soda-Stream Mix** does more than whip up bubbly water and syrupy sodas. The Yves Béhar-designed carbonator automatically adjusts the amount of CO₂ released to suit any beverage — whether you're making juice or creating cocktails. It even downloads recipes to craft the perfect drink. **Price TBD; mix-soda-stream.com**

The Gravity-Defying Seat

When crafting the **Dragonfly Chair**, Italian designer Odo Fioravanti studied the imbalance in the structure of its namesake insect: legs in front and a long overhanging tail. To mimic that visual drama in furniture, Fioravanti crafted a steel structure with four legs joined at the front, which allows it to cantilever, creating a cool-looking, comfortable perch. "It seems like it's cheating physics," says Fioravanti. **\$394; segis-usa.com**



THE WOBBLE BOARD FOR WORK

When **FluidStance Level** inventor Joel Heath traded his 80 ski days a year for a job as the president of Teva, even a stand-up desk wasn't a cure for inactivity. "I really started feeling the lack of movement in my joints," says Heath. Standing on the Level — a wooden deck atop an aluminum web that teeters as you shift your weight — generates a subtle range of motion that increases heart rate and results in a healthier day at the office. **From \$289; fluidstance.com**



The Modern Kettle

Berlin-based designer Nils Chudy helped rework the electric tea kettle by eliminating the kettle itself — and the extra energy to heat water you won't use. With the **Miito**, you simply put a ceramic mug atop an induction base, fill it with your desired amount of water, then place a metal rod inside. The base heats the rod (not the mug) and the water around it, then shuts off once it boils.

Price TBD; miito.com



THE SMARTER ROBOT VACUUM

Rather than rely solely on infrared sensors and crude manual bumpers, the **Dyson 360 Eye** navigates with a 360-degree camera. This allows the robot vacuum to triangulate its position, see where the furniture is, and avoid obstacles. Its other secret weapon? A 78,000-rpm motor.

Price TBD; dyson.com



THE SELF-SHARPENING KNIFE BLOCK

Say goodbye to dullness: The **Calphalon Contemporary Self-Sharpening 15-Piece Cutlery Set** has ceramic sharpeners built in to the knife block. That means every time you reach for a knife (or put it back), the German steel blade gets a touch-up.

\$220; store.calphalon.com



The Trash Can With a Built-In Vacuum

See you later, dustpan: The **Bruno** trash can automatically senses when a broom approaches, triggering an eight-second vacuum cycle that sucks up a day's worth of crumbs and deposits them in the bin. The smart can also opens with just a swipe of a hand above the lid; a companion app sends text reminders on trash day and when you're running low on bags.

\$199; brunosmartcan.com



THE SALAD SAVIOR

While the credit card-size **Chef'n LooseLeaf** might not fit into the essentials category, it'll save hours of prep time for veggie lovers. Just pull stalks of a green like kale through the plastic device, and it strips the leaves from the hard stems in seconds. The smaller holes make fast work of herbs, too.

\$8; chefn.com





The Improved Outdoor Faucet

Leaking spigots are a thing of the past, thanks to the **Aquor House Hydrant** system. Its flush-mounted fixture uses water pressure to create a leak-free seal with your hose; and to prevent freezing, the water is stopped at a rear valve deep in the house wall. "The design is based on marine-deck wash systems on sailboats, which take a beating," says Aquor co-founder Kamil Slusarski. **\$50; aquorwatersystems.com**

MY FAVORITE DESIGN



"I've been using a black **Pentel Sign Pen** nearly every day since architecture school. It's such a simple and humble instrument compared with the digital tools available to us today. But its comfortable, angled body, wide fiber tip, and brilliant black ink make drawing tactile and fun."

David Rockwell is an architect and designer whose projects include five W Hotels.

THE SMOOTHER BLENDER

The tilted **Electrolux Masterpiece Collection Blender** not only sets itself apart visually from other high-power blenders, it also performs better. "By changing the angle of the blades a bit, we created an irregular vortex, so you're not just blending some ingredients while leaving others untouched," says Per Kvarby, an Electrolux product director. The result: a smoother, consistent blend that won't clog your straw. **\$299; electroluxappliances.com**



THE RECYCLED LOUNGER

L.A.-based designer Stephen Kenn sent Truck Furniture co-founder Tok Kise vintage military tents to upholster the duo's new **Boomerang** chair and ottoman. "Each tent is unique," Kenn says, "with patched tears and soldiers' names or military unit numbers stamped into the material." **\$2,800; shop.stephenkenn.com**



BEER CANS GET A MAKEOVER

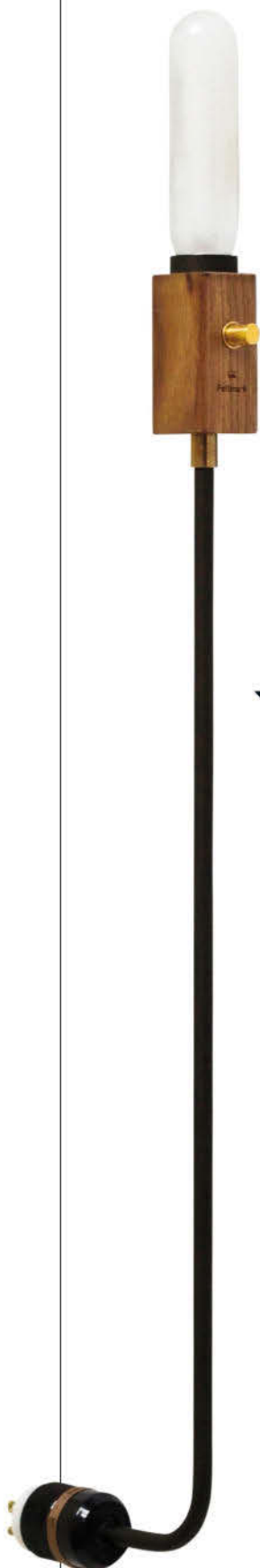
"With beer shelves more crowded than ever, breweries are doing everything they can to stand out from the pack," says Harvey Shepard, author of *Oh Beautiful Beer: The Evolution of Craft Beer & Design*. **Fair State** (top left) uses a simple design centered around a black infinity symbol. And San Francisco's **Speakeasy** (bottom left) features icons lifted from Prohibition-era comic books. "From the moment I started working on **Modern Times** (bottom right), I knew I wanted packaging as magnificent as the beer," says Jacob McKean, who named his brewery after a Utopian community built on Long Island in 1850. The cans, featuring a logo by Simon Walker, are retro and futuristic at the same time — and the beers inside are pretty great, too.

Also pictured, clockwise from top middle: Boulevard Pop-Up Session IPA, Copper Kettle Helles, Boulevard Radler



THE REIMAGINED STANDING LAMP

Ideal for small spaces, the **Feltmark Wald** is a floor lamp that doesn't touch the floor. The deconstructed light plugs directly into an outlet, extending just four inches from the wall and up to 36 inches high. Feltmark removed nonessential parts, such as a bulky base, and anchored the light with a rigid aluminum stem that's been bead-blasted and color-anodized, a process that increases the metal's natural oxide layer and gives it a rich, textured finish. Topping it is a white ash or black walnut socket you won't want to cover with a shade. **\$159; feltmark.com**



THE TWO-IN-ONE WASHING MACHINE

Instead of the storage pedestal most modern machines sit on, the **LG Twin Wash** rests directly on a second unit. Below the 5.2-cubic-foot main tub is a smaller, top-loading one-cubic-foot machine, perfect for delicates — it spins at a gentler 700 rpm. **From \$2,098; lg.com**



WAKE UP TO
THE STRENGTH
TO ENDURE
A LIFETIME OF
BACON JOKES



WAKE
UP TO
EGGS
with Bacon

Nobody knows eggs better than Bacon, Kevin Bacon. And that's why I know an egg for breakfast provides 6 grams of high-quality protein for 70 calories and no sugar or carbs. So enough with the Bacon puns. Pick up an egg—they're eggcellent.

IncredibleEgg.org



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H



→ The optional three-axis mount at the bottom of the drone ensures that a GoPro always shoots smooth, shake-free footage and can be finely controlled by two knobs on a remote.

THE CINEMATIC DRONE

While flying a drone is fun, the real thrill comes in capturing pro-quality footage. "Users want to be Steven Spielberg," says Jason Short, vice president of design at 3D Robotics. "So when we designed a drone, we really wanted to design it around the camera. Everything in **Solo** is optimized to control a GoPro." While other motorized mounts only let you aim a camera that's already running, the Solo Gimbal is the first that can access a GoPro's settings to start and stop recording midflight. Dual one-gigahertz computers on the quadcopter come preloaded with cinema-ready moves: a Selfie mode, which sends the robot skyward and back, all while staying focused on its subject; and an Orbit mode, which circles a subject for dramatic wraparound footage. **\$1,400 with Gimbal; 3drobotics.com**

HI-FI SOUND ON THE GO

Audeze's new **EL-8 Open-Back Headphones** use a unique magnetic design to deliver ultra-detailed sound with visceral bass — straight from an iPhone. Similar sound quality has typically required a dedicated amp and cost nearly \$2,000, but Audeze is bridging the gap to the mainstream. "People pay \$400 for headphones that don't sound good," says co-founder Sankar Thiagasamudram. "We wanted to raise the bar." **\$699; audeze.com**

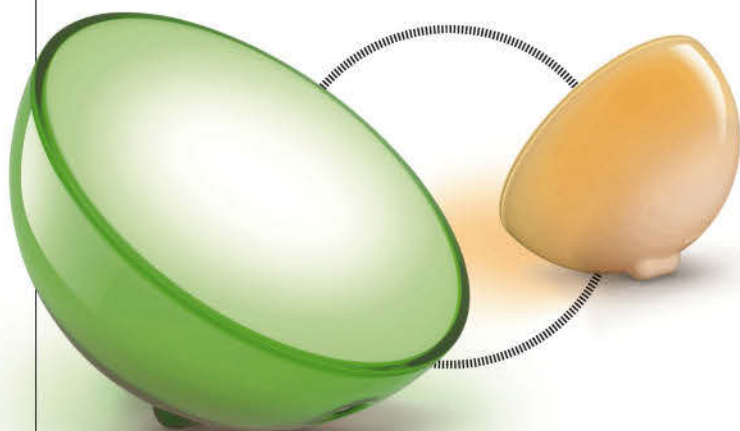


MY FAVORITE DESIGN



"The **Moulton Bike** has small, strong wheels and high-pressure tires, so you go fast with less effort. The folding bike is a dream, and not just because it's compact and portable. It's also made from the same type of stainless steel tubing found on jet fighters for the transmission of hydraulic fluids."

James Dyson invented his now-iconic vacuum in the 1980s.



THE PORTABLE MOOD LIGHT

Lieven Verdin, a senior design consultant at Philips, found inspiration in old-school oil lanterns for the portable **Hue Go**. The rechargeable, five-inch, bowl-shaped fixture — the latest in Philips' line of color-changing, smartphone-controllable LEDs — works best lying at an angle and bathing a wall in light, or waking you in the morning with an artificial sunrise. But because it's battery-powered, the Hue Go can also be moved between rooms. It even works at the dinner table for ambient lighting (the Candlelight mode flickers convincingly). **\$100; meethue.com**



THE FAST-SHOOTING COMPACT CAMERA

The all-metal **Nikon 1 J5** is a visual and tactile nod to the film-camera days, a conversation piece that will get passed around long before its photos get Instagrammed. But it boasts completely modern tech, like back-side illumination for the 20.8-megapixel sensor (for better low-light shots) and an action mode that fires 20 photos per second, saving the five sharpest. **\$500; nikonusa.com**



A POLAROID FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

What's missing from a world where a point-and-shoot is always in your pocket? A printer as portable as your camera phone. The mini **Polaroid Zip** is an inkless printer that connects wirelessly to any device and produces 2-by-3-inch photos on the go. "We kept it small and light, with rounded surfaces that make it easy to slip in a pocket," says senior designer Gregoire Vandenburg. A companion app lets you edit photos before printing — and re-create that retro Polaroid look. **\$130; polaroid.com**



THE SPEAKER OF THE FUTURE

Though its footprint is just a little larger than a kitchen toaster's, the **Devialet Phantom** is a 750-watt Bluetooth speaker with a sound that makes it capable of replacing your home stereo setup. Most remarkable is its thundering bass: Hermetically sealed drivers vibrate visibly outward from both sides, forcing a low end of 16 hertz. (That's pipe-organ low.) **\$1,990; en.devialet.com**

THE SUPERWIDE SCREEN

The **Samsung S9W**, a concept designed by Yves Béhar, is the first truly stunning television since the invention of HDTV. The extra-wide 82-inch 4K display stretches to a cinematic 21:9 ratio, has a curved screen that automatically orients itself toward the viewer, and sits atop a pedestal that houses a built-in audio system. **Price TBD; samsung.com**



The Movie Theater in Your Pocket

Portable projectors aren't new, but the **ZTE Spro 2 Smart Projector** is like a stand-alone entertainment system. Thanks to cellular connectivity, it works anywhere: An impromptu movie night under the stars is as easy as tapping the Netflix icon on a five-inch touchscreen and beaming a 10-foot picture. **\$499; zteusa.com**



POLAROID: IVAN VUKELIC/GETTY IMAGES

PROMOTION

MEN'S JOURNAL
PRESENTS

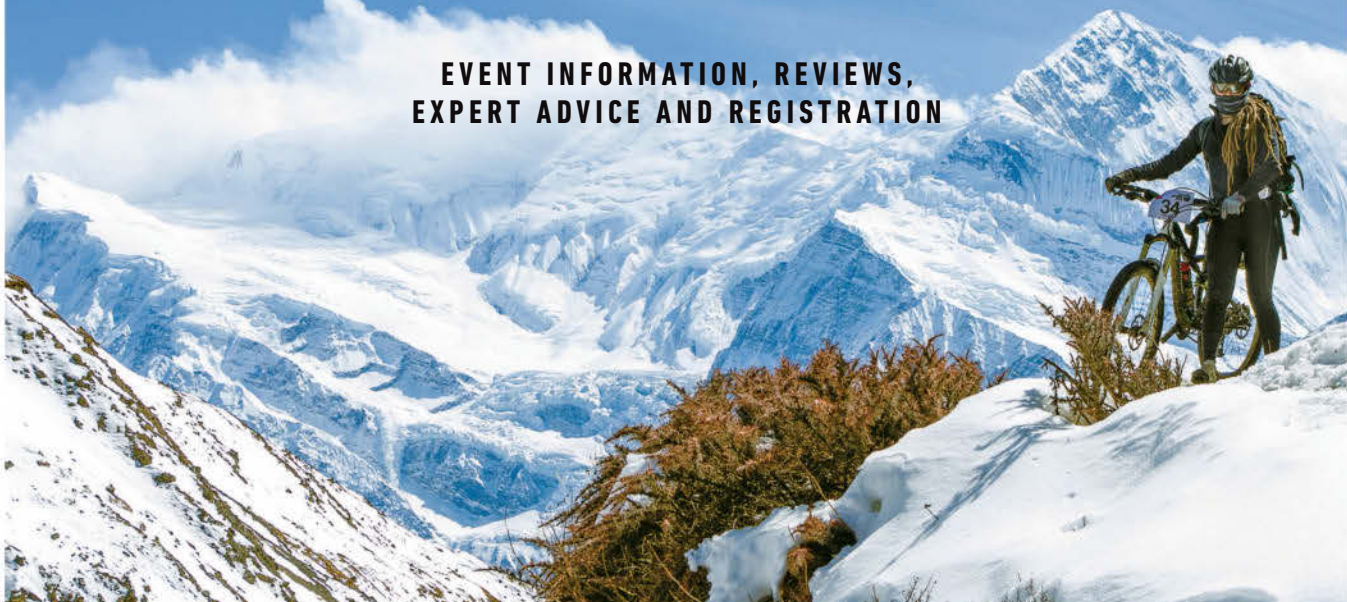
THE 2015 ADVENTURE RACE CALENDAR

MENSJOURNAL.COM/ADVENTURE-RACES


MUDDERS & OBSTACLE RACES | TRAIL RACES | ULTRAMARATHONS | MOUNTAIN BIKING
CYCLOCROSS | STAND-UP PADDLEBOARD | SURFING | SKIING | SNOWBOARDING
WHITewater KAYAK & CANOEING | OPEN WATER SWIMMING | RAGNARS & RELAYS

EVENT INFORMATION, REVIEWS,
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GAURAVMAN SHERCHAN - YAK ATTACK



PLAY



A quick-release lever on the stem lets the handlebars fold 90 degrees, and the pedals collapse with a simple click. The result? A bike that takes up 50 percent less space. It even fits behind the couch.

THE SPACE-SAVING ROAD BIKE

Berlin-based bike builder Jörg Schindelhauer gives full credit for the invention of the **ThinBike** to treehugger.com's Graham Hill, who dreamed up a bike with handlebars and pedals that fold in parallel with the frame, so that it would stow flat against an apartment wall. But Schindelhauer hated the look of folding bikes with tiny wheels. "A really small wheel can't handle potholes," he says. The ThinBike, by comparison, "corners like a real, full-size bike." It also has a commuter-friendly carbon belt and a lightweight aluminum frame. **\$1,650; schindelhauerbikes.com**



The Always-Clear Ski Goggles

Goggles are helpful when you're bombing downhill, but they fog over as you climb in the backcountry. "I couldn't see for 45 minutes," says Julbo designer Clément Bonnet-Mathieu of a trip in the French Alps. His solution: A latch on the **Aerospace Goggle** separates lens from frame to prevent condensation. **\$220; julbousa.com**

THE MAMMOTH HAMMOCK

As a child, Alex Shirley-Smith was inspired by the Ewok tree village in *Return of the Jedi* and studied to become an architect, designing treehouses. He would eventually conceive a spiderweb-like tent that hangs from trees and created the **Tentsile Trillium**, a 15-foot open-air platform that suspends from three points, with room for three adults to lounge all day. **\$250; tentsile.com**



THE JUICED BAT

Beer leaguers can start perfecting their home run trot: The **EQT X3 RBZ** is a collaboration between Adidas and TaylorMade that takes advantage of the golf club maker's experience in carbon construction to engineer a baseball bat with better weight distribution. So swings are faster and balls fly a lot farther. **\$400; adidas.com**



THE TINY TEARDROP TRAILER

The petite **Hütte Hut** camper can be towed behind a compact car, but its innovative design feels anything but cramped. "It blurs the lines between inside and out," says co-creator Katrina Manzo. "The frame incorporates double doors that provide panoramic views when open, making 44 square feet feel exponentially larger." Plus, a domed canvas roof lets in plenty of diffuse light. **From \$63,900; huttehut.com.**





The Steel Racer That Looks as Good as It Rides

While Ritte Cycles' stainless steel frames ride superbly, company founder Spencer Canon wants them to embody something beyond speed. To make the **Ritte Snob** "more fun and adventurous," he wedded Bauhaus script with big blocks of color influenced by racing liveries of 1960s Alfa Romeo GTAs and later Porsches. "Google 'Porsche 935' and be hit in the face with awesome," says Canon. **\$3,000; rittecycles.com**



THE SAFE-FOLDING BOW SAW

Packed away in a sleek leather sheath, the **Agawa Canyon Boreal21** unfolds into a powerful saw capable of reducing 10-inch-wide logs to kindling. "Its portable and compact shape and size make it perfect for packing away on camping and canoe trips," says Graham Beck, co-owner and product designer at Agawa Canyon. Best of all, it weighs just one pound. **From \$65; agawacanyoninc.com**

THE PACKABLE EMERGENCY LANTERN

Tasked with designing a product for post-earthquake relief efforts, two graduate students created the **LuminaID PackLite 16** — an inflatable, solar-powered, waterproof LED lantern. Because the lamps deflate and fold into the size of a business card, they're easily distributed in times of emergency but can also be hung around a campsite. **\$25; luminaid.com**



THE URBAN SURFER

Kyle Doerskin, CEO of OneWheel, dreamed of snowboarding year-round. Since powder is scarce in the San Francisco Bay area, he designed a board that surfs concrete at up to 15 miles per hour. "The secret is a gyro that makes balancing easy," he says. Its hub motor goes seven miles on a charge. **\$1,500; rideonewheel.com**



The Softer Chucks

Using parent company Nike's Lunarlon foam and a suede liner, the **Converse Chuck Taylor All Star II** is a much more comfortable update of the street classic. The goal, says Damion Silver, global design director, was to build "a shoe you can live in all day, while maintaining the original's integrity." **\$75; converse.com**

THE NEW RETRO CLASSICS



THE DIVER WITH A PEDIGREE

With a scratchproof sapphire crystal and self-winding movement, the **Diver 65** is a modernized version of a watch Oris sold in 1965. The blocky numbers complete the throwback look, and its 100-meter depth rating is also true to the original — modest by today's standards but plenty for aspiring frogmen. **\$1,850; oris.ch**



THE DRESSED-UP TRACK WATCH

Motor-sports chronographs bearing the Carrera name date to 1963, but the new **TAG Heuer Carrera-Calibre Heuer 01** is anything but nostalgic. A titanium, carbide-coated steel case complements an open dial that reveals a new movement, which took five years to design and build. **\$5,250; tagheuer.com**

MY FAVORITE DESIGN



"The **Eames Rocker** is playful, creative, and beautifully proportioned. The chair came to be at a time when formality in someone's living room was still expected but became the symbol of an era less driven by social conventions, as it remains today. The fiberglass shell was equally innovative."

Yves Béhar is the industrial designer responsible for the SodaStream and the Jawbone.

THE ALL-WOOD BOARDS

A Swiss businessman purchased Scott in 2005, but the **Sage Brush** is an homage to the company's Sun Valley, Idaho, roots. The faux-wood graphic depicts sagebrush, a plant that thrives there, while a deep side cut and full wood construction allow the ski to be light and turn easily. **\$850; scott-sports.com**



A STRAIGHT SHOOTER

Mishits get a lot of attention when it comes to long drives, but they are just as prevalent in a golfer's short game. To solve that problem, Nike put a polymer insert into the **Method Matter B2-01** putter for greater consistency as well as 10 percent faster roll. Its black finish reduces glare — and looks cool. **\$129; nike.com**

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Matthews' specialty was spying behind enemy lines. "It's something not many people at the agency can do."





SECRETS OF A SECRET AGENT

Jason Matthews was a CIA spy for more than 30 years during the height of the Cold War, from Asia to the Caribbean to the Soviet Union. Now he's got a new assignment: writing deadly accurate thrillers.

BY **JOSH EELLS**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **ART STREIBER**



in a busy Monday morning in March, geopolitical intrigue is running high. In Geneva, the U.S. and Iran are preparing to sit down for nuclear talks, the future of Middle East peace possibly in the balance. In Moscow, a Russian TV station has just aired a controversial

documentary in which President Vladimir Putin declared he was prepared to use nuclear weapons over the crisis in Ukraine. The actual Putin, meanwhile, is nowhere to be seen, having gone missing for the past 10 days, following the murder of a popular dissident, Boris Nemtsov, on a bridge near the Kremlin. North Korea is firing missiles; ISIS is digging in to Tikrit. And 7,000 miles away, in his oasis-like backyard in the desert of Southern California, surrounded by a softly trickling fountain and grapefruit and palm trees, sits a mild-mannered novelist with top-secret insight into all of it.

“Whatever it was, it was a pretty slick hit,” says Jason Matthews of the Nemtsov killing. “If you watch the video, there’s a snowplow that comes at exactly the right time to block the cameras and shield traffic on the street. It also probably distracted [Nemtsov] and covered the footsteps of the guy who came up behind him.” As for rumors of Putin’s involvement, he says, “I don’t know if Putin would have said, ‘Whack this guy.’ But he may have, in a private meeting, said, ‘This guy is really a stone in my shoe,’ and waited to see who came up with a plan.”

Matthews, 63, is something of a Putin expert, having authored two spy novels in which the former KGB operative plays a central, if semifictional, role. The first, 2013’s *Red Sparrow*, was a bestseller whose movie rights were scooped up before it was even published; the sequel, the recently released *Palace of Treason*, also debuted on the best-seller list. Both are set against the real-life backdrop of a resurgent Cold War that Matthews believes is the result of Russia’s rapacious empire lust. At his readings, he likes to thank his wife, his daughters, “and Vladimir Putin for the endless content.”

But Matthews also draws from another source, one that lends his books a unique verisimilitude. Before he became a novelist, Matthews spent 33 years in the Operations Directorate, the clandestine wing of the

CIA. For three decades he was undercover overseas, collecting secrets to help America fight the Cold War and the global war on terror. He began as a junior case officer pounding the streets of Iron Curtain-era Europe and rose to be chief or deputy chief at seven different CIA stations, winning a vaunted Intelligence Medal of Merit along the way. There’s a long tradition of British novelists — le Carré, Fleming, Cumming — with real-life intelligence backgrounds. But Matthews is the only American spy writer who spent most of his life as a spy.

It’s a blazing day with the temperature in the mid-90s, and Matthews is in the shade by his pool, wiping sweat from his forehead and puffing on one of his ever-present cigars. He’s wearing shorts and boat shoes, and his pet dachshund, Gus, is in his lap. Matthews speaks carefully, in long, discursive paragraphs, with the soothing bedside manner of a man who used to convince people to commit treason for a living. With his owl glasses and nonthreatening physique, he’s the last person you’d peg as a spy — until you find out he was one, and then it makes perfect sense.

Matthews says his job was simple: “to recruit sources with access who could provide intelligence to our policymakers to save the world from nuclear holocaust.” (He laughs: “Short version.”) In other words, he befriended foreigners with inside information about their governments and convinced them to share their secrets with the U.S. He specialized in “denied-area operations,” unfriendly locales where the

CIA couldn’t operate freely, such as Communist countries in Asia and the Caribbean and various Soviet republics. The secrecy agreement he signed when he joined the agency prevents him from disclosing exactly where he worked, but with a wink he’ll tell you he’s “familiar with” such cities as Athens, Belgrade, Budapest, Hong Kong, and Istanbul.

Matthews’ books have all the elements of great spy thrillers: double crosses, mole hunts, assassination attempts, outlandish sex. But what really makes them come alive are the fine-grain details of workaday espionage: the cables back to headquarters, the power struggles with clueless bosses who “don’t know the street,” and, most of all, the endless hours spent on foot in European capitals, checking for surveillance to make sure you’re “clear” before a clandestine meeting. A review of *Red Sparrow* on the CIA’s website praised Matthews’ depiction of tradecraft, calling it basically a how-to manual that would make fellow officers “wonder how he got all this past the Publications Review Board,” the CIA panel that has to sign off on his work. (Answer: It took a while.) One major subplot in the new book rang so true that some higher-ups at the agency at first didn’t want him to publish it.

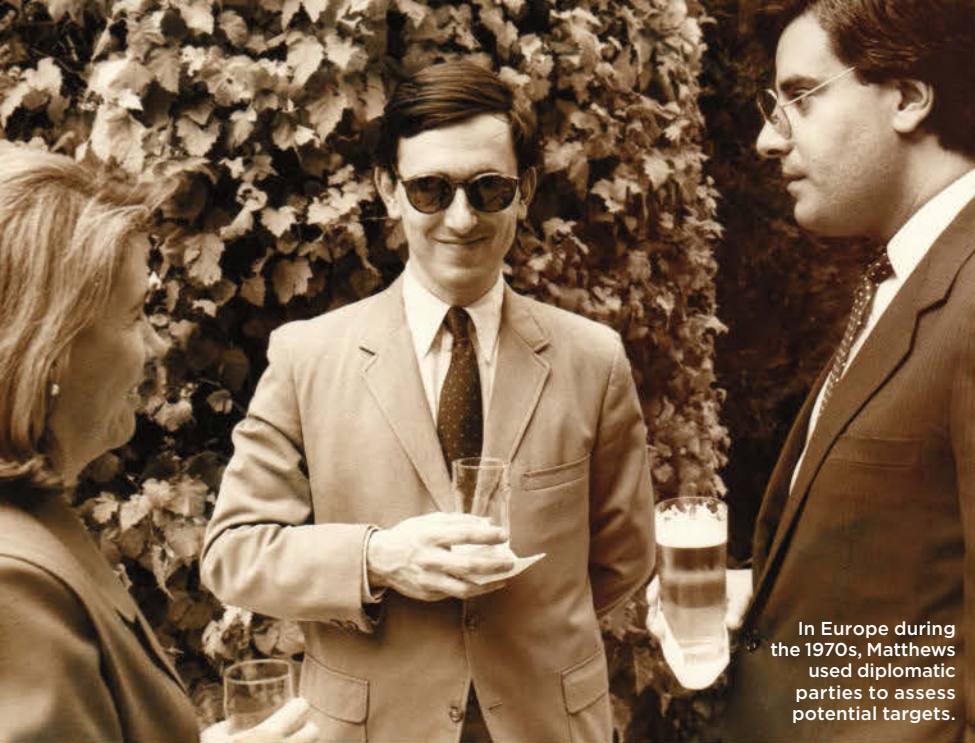
Matthews and his wife, Suzanne — herself a 34-year veteran of the CIA (more on that later) — moved to this golf course near Palm Springs after his retirement, in 2009. (Matthews calls the area “God’s waiting room.”) He retired “overtly,” meaning his CIA background isn’t classified, but the specifics of it still are, so he asks that certain details be kept off the record in order to protect his former assets. “Theoretically, the Cold War is long over,” he says. “But someone could still say, ‘You know, you were in Athens at the same time as this dickhead ...’ and start to put the pieces together. It’s a long shot. But it’s the little things.”

He takes another puff of his cigar. “Espionage is the world’s second-oldest profession. And what it has in common with the first profession is: Someone’s going to get it in the end.”

It’s getting hot in the shade, so we move inside, to the cool relief of their chicly appointed modernist house. There are glass walls with mountain views and tasteful Asian-inspired art, the comfortable rewards that follow a career of high danger. Matthews always had diplomatic cover, so he was less likely to be killed, but he could have been jailed or interrogated and his agents might have been killed. “European capitals in the Seventies were very la dolce vita kinds of places, but you’re still walking around with a target on your back,” he says. “If you made a mistake, people could disappear.”

Matthews takes a sip of iced tea. Overhead, the vaulted wooden ceiling beams creak and pop with the heat. “You should hear it at night,” he says. “It’s everything I can do not to shoot a hole in the roof.”

Contributing editor JOSH EELLS wrote about exploring the Channel Islands in the May issue.



In Europe during the 1970s, Matthews used diplomatic parties to assess potential targets.

ONE OF MATTHEWS' favorite words is *phlegmatic*. It pops up five times in his two books and occasionally in his speech, a linguistic tic that reveals something about the man himself. Matthews, too, is phlegmatic: cool, low-key, seemingly unflappable. Physically he resembles the hero of his books, the young CIA officer Nate Nash, a handsome ex-swimmer whose anonymously dark hair and unremarkable height help him blend into a crowd "the way taller or gangling or redheaded trainees could not do." Nate's most distinctive characteristic is his "darting brown eyes," which can read people and expressions with almost supernatural insight. If Matthews isn't quite that good, he's close.

Matthews has prepared lunch, a traditional Greek meal of dolmas, tzatziki, and red-pepper hummus, with an olive-tomato-feta salad on the side. He's a real food guy: At the end of every chapter in his books is a recipe for a dish that's mentioned in said chapter. Usually they're straightforward — babka (Polish rum cake), Viennese croquettes — but they're also occasionally funny, for instance when a bullet from a lipstick gun turns the inside of an Iranian thug's motorcycle helmet to a metaphorical bowl of tomato soup, followed wryly by Matthews' recipe for gazpacho.

"You can tell a lot about a person from the way they eat," Matthews says, digging in. The way they hold their knife and fork, how well they hold their liquor. It's all part of what he calls "opening the human envelope" — the psychological process of getting to know a potential source and exploiting his vulnerabilities. He says the process can take years, and the success rate is low. There are certain techniques the CIA uses, with jargony names like "eliciting" and "throwing bones," but perhaps the most important quality for a case officer

"To recruit someone is to get him to agree to something absolutely illogical: committing treason."

is a certain comfort with what Matthews euphemistically calls "untruths."

"You have to be able to — how should I say it? Suspend morality," he says. "Basically, you have to lie. You have to inveigle people. You take care of your agent, you step in front of a bus to protect your agent — but at the same time, you are intrinsically stringing him along. To recruit someone is to get him or her to agree to something absolutely illogical: committing treason against their country. So there is a modicum of being a little sneaky, a little manipulative, and sometimes a little cruel."

Matthews maintains that lying by CIA officers isn't as pervasive as it seems. "We don't carry it around like a gun in a holster," he says. For our purposes, he promises that he'll either tell the truth or simply not answer. "Right now I can't conceive of anything I would need to tell you an untruth about. For instance, if you ask me if I ever killed anybody, I'd say, 'I can't tell you that.'" He grins mischievously. "The honest answer is no."

Matthews' books, with their ever-present surveillance and midnight double-dealings, are so vivid and immersive that they have a way of making you feel just a tiny bit para-

noid. The first time I visited them at home, Suzanne excused herself early to attend a meeting of the community cultural board on which she volunteers. When I got back to my car, I noticed that my suitcase, locked in the trunk, was partly unzipped. For a minute or two, I was convinced that she had broken in and tampered with it, just to mess with me. When I tell them about this the next day, Suzanne laughs. Matthews doesn't.

"Oh, we tossed your car," he deadpans. "Just wanted to make sure."

JASON MATTHEWS is not an alias, although it sounds as if it could be. He believes the family's name was originally Mathaios; his grandparents were ethnic Greeks from Greece and Turkey who came to the U.S. at the turn of the last century. Matthews grew up in a Greek-speaking household in Connecticut, then majored in French and Spanish at college. After graduation, he enrolled in journalism school and soon went to D.C. for job interviews. ("For all I knew, I'd be writing brochures for the Forest Service.") Instead he wound up landing a few bonus interviews via a relative at the State Department. "And one of those interviews," Matthews says, "turned out to be Christians in Action" — the CIA.

As Matthews recalls it, that first meeting was less than glamorous. "Nondescript building in Rosslyn, Virginia. Gray little office. Gray little man." But the agency needed Greek speakers, and he fit the bill. So after a background check and several polygraph exams, he joined the CIA's entering class of November 1976.

Matthews can't say where his first posting was, but given that Greek was his selling point, Athens is not a bad guess. "I was a junior guy," he says, "and my job was to shut up and make sure the safe house had beer in the fridge. But that was the first time you got the sense that there were people in these dangerous little corners of the globe doing the same thing you were. As a young person, that was really cool. Obviously you couldn't say anything. But there was a self-sustaining pride: 'We're actually in the CIA!'"

Matthews' cover identity was as a political officer in the State Department. As a rule, foreign intelligence services tend to assume that a certain number of employees at every American embassy are spies, but they don't know which ones. As a result, much of his time was devoted to maintaining his cover, stamping visas on the visa line like any other junior employee. In a job where he was supposed to find foreigners who might want something from the U.S. in exchange for information, they were being served to him on a platter. "You could always tell the spooks on the consular line," Matthews says. "They were the guys inviting applicants for coffee later."

After clocking out at the embassy, Matthews would go to work at his actual job, recruiting potential agents. (To note: In CIA



From left: Matthews and his wife, Suzanne, in the Mediterranean in the 1970s; at their home near Palm Springs, California, in March

speak, an agent is a foreigner who provides information to an American case officer; the *agents* are the sources, and the *officers* are the spies.) In the late Seventies, the jackpot for an American officer was a Russian or Chinese target, but other Communist nationals and certain left-wing paramilitary groups were also prized. On his first tour, Matthews says he “fell into a pretty big one.” He can’t really elaborate, except to say that “it was the first time that someone from his country had been recruited. It was sort of trailblazey.” (“It was a pretty big deal,” Suzanne confirms.) Whatever it was, it set his career on an upward track.

For his first few postings in Western Europe, Matthews followed a routine cycle: “Recruit a guy and send him back in. Meet behind the soccer stadium at midnight, plan things, and then hold your breath while you read *Pravda* every morning to see if his execution has been announced.” He says at any given time a case officer probably has a dozen agents: foreign attachés, reporters, hotel clerks. “It’s all part of how the octopus spreads its tentacles.”

But after a couple of tours, Matthews decided to seek special training in what the agency calls “internal operations” — essentially spying behind enemy lines. “It’s something not many people at the agency can do,” he says. He spent two years in D.C. undergoing education in so-called denied-area tradecraft, where surveillance was assumed at all times. He learned tricks like dead drops (delivering packages to agents without arousing suspicion) and the MCD, or moving-car delivery (hand brakes, no brake lights). A crack in-house CIA team played mind games with him, simulating hostile KGB surveillance: breaking into his house, taking a dump in his toilet, pouring anchovy oil on his car’s engine block. “It’s sort of the psychic equivalent of Hell Week for SEALs,” he says. “They want to see who can handle it and who can’t.”



Matthews spent the next decade or so in denied-area postings: sneaking around the Balkans during the Yugoslav Wars, reinventing internal operations in Cuba after a previous CIA foul-up. There were some close calls: In one Eastern-bloc country, he arrived at a clandestine meeting in the woods 30 minutes early and happened upon two men diving into the bushes. It was to be an ambush, but they hadn’t set it up yet. “I got out,” he says. “But it was very close.”

But those kinds of days were the exceptions. For the most part, says Matthews, “the job of a case officer is not terribly action-packed. There are no car chases or guns being carried. You’re in an embassy writing reports.” There’s a great moment in *Red Sparrow* when Nate Nash and a superior are trying to break in to someone’s apartment. “Can you pick the lock?” Nash asks. “Be serious,” his boss says.

As Matthews describes it, case officers are more like clandestine journalists, developing sources, pumping them for information, and writing up what they learn in cables for their bosses back at HQ. He always liked writing cables: “Without bragging or hyperbole, you had to write a very careful, descriptive account of who you saw, what you did, and some of the atmospherics.” Suzanne says colleagues at the agency used to comment on how good Matthews’ cables were, saying he should be a writer. In his books, even minor characters get a rich backstory, touching on everything from their financial status to their sex life. “I never thought of it,” Matthews says. “But it’s a lot like the foreign contact reports I used

to write: *When he started talking about the Ukrainian diaspora, his eyes welled up. You’re basically doing character sketches.*”

AFTER A FEW “ass-kicking denied-area tours,” Matthews was so skilled at internal operations that he was assigned to be an instructor and later the I.O. chief. His job was teaching young spies how not to get caught. One day he offers to give me a lesson. “It will be a little corny,” he says. “But it’ll give you an idea of some of the things we had to think about and let you feel how the adrenaline starts to pump.”

Matthews used to love being in the street, dodging surveillance. You can tell from the quasi-mystical way he writes about it — the tingling on the arms, the coolness on the neck, the way a veteran officer feels coverage before he sees it. “You almost try to establish a metaphysical bond with them,” Matthews says. “The goal is not to lose them. It’s to lull them into feeling comfortable — then use that few-second gap to make something happen.”

We’re in Matthews’ Audi SUV, making our way to a nearby shopping mall, where he’s going to demonstrate the espionage cat-and-mouse game. On the way, he explains the concept of an SDR, or surveillance-detection route — a circuitous, sometimes hours-long journey designed to shake loose any surveillance you might have. He says in one country his surveillance team nicknamed him “the Fly” because of the long, meandering loops he would drive to work every day. If protecting one’s agent is an officer’s top priority, as Matthews believes, then a solid SDR could be the most important (continued on page 96)



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THE STATE OF BASE JUMPING

Jeff Shapiro (in flight)
and Scotty Bob
Morgan opening a new
route in Montana's
Bitterroot Mountains

Over the Edge

HOW A FEW PIONEERING
WINGSUIT PILOTS
ARE CARVING OUT A
HOME FOR THEIR SPORT
— ONE POTENTIALLY
DEADLY JUMP AT A TIME.

BY PHIL KLAY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
CHAD COPELAND



PLUS: INSIDE
JEB CORLISS'
PLAN TO FLY
ALONG THE
GREAT WALL
OF CHINA.
AND WHY
LEGALIZING
THE SPORT
WILL MAKE
IT SAFER.



THE STATE OF BASE JUMPING

A few days after returning from Utah's Zion National Park, where he had gone to recover the body of his friend Sean Leary, Jeff Shapiro sat down with his wife to talk over what had been his and Leary's mutual passion. The two were part of a small group of wingsuit pilots dedicated to finding legal places to jump in the American backcountry, off the radar of the National Park Service, which levies heavy fines against anyone caught jumping in park territory. They'd hike into the mountains and leap from cliffs,

using the nylon wings stretched under their arms and between their legs to glide forward, hugging close to the slopes, darting through canyons and notches formed by rock outcroppings — all while moving at triple-digit speeds.

They call it proximity flying, and like all wingsuit BASE jumping, it's incredibly dangerous. But for Shapiro's wife, Kara, the knowledge that Leary was his partner had given her some comfort. Sean Leary was a talented pilot and climber. Together with Dean Potter, who would die wingsuiting this past May, Leary set a record two-and-a-half-hour climb up Yosemite's El Capitan in 2010. She had confidence in Leary's judgment and experience. Then he attempted the jump in Zion and impacted near a ridgeline, dying instantly.

PHIL KLAY is the author of the short story collection *Redeployment*, which won the 2014 National Book Award.

As a professionally sponsored athlete in a sport that claims an estimated 5 percent of its participants, Shapiro had lost friends before, but Leary's death hit hard. "It rocked my whole belief system, that you can do this safely and sustainably," he says. He always believed he operated within a reasonable margin of error. Of course, Leary had felt the same.

"Well," Shapiro said to Kara. "How are you feeling?"

Kara, a Web developer with a matter-of-fact way of speaking, had a simple response.

"Think about Nya," she said.

Nya is their 11-year-old daughter. It was the first time Kara had brought her up in this context.

"Think about Nya," she said again. "Think about the fact that if you quit BASE jumping because you're afraid for her or for me, what example are you setting? Your daughter believes in magic and that fairies exist and that human beings can fly because of the things you do, and that chas-

ing your bliss and being a happy person and giving the best of yourself to the people you love the most is an important thing. And if you quit and get a normal job, what's that going to do for Nya?"

A week after Leary's death, three more friends would die while proximity flying in Switzerland. A few weeks later, Shapiro was gearing up to find a new exit, or launch point, in Montana's Bitterroot Mountains and jump it for the first time. In Shapiro's mind, it's what his late friend wanted: to forge an American identity for wingsuit BASE jumping by finding new, as-yet-unjumped exits on rocky perches far from the national parks.

The American wingsuit BASE scene has lagged behind Europe's for the simple reason that most of our high cliffs are in national parks, where jumping is illegal. This leaves American wingsuit pilots with two options: Jump illegally, often at night, in national parks, or find legal exits on land outside the parks. This means heading to remote regions of the American backcountry, hiking or climbing to possible exits, mapping out flight lines and landing areas, and performing the jump in conditions where, if something goes wrong, help will be much farther away than it would in a national park or at most European sites.

"It's a very American-pioneering thing," Shapiro says. And to make a legal American wingsuit BASE-jumping scene viable, they need to find new exits, open them, and then slowly grow the sport by carefully sharing those exits with the few wingsuit pilots they trust enough not to kill themselves attempting a jump beyond their abilities. For Shapiro, one of those pilots is a former Marine named Scotty Bob Morgan.

BEFORE HE STARTED jumping off cliffs, Scotty Bob Morgan was in Iraq, doing a job that most civilians would consider dangerous: He was a combat photographer who often went outside the wire throughout

BELOW, FROM LEFT: HENRY GUTTMANN/GETTY IMAGES; OLAV ZIPPER/GETTY IMAGES

Wingsuits: A Brief, Lethal History

1912

With the hope of designing the first parachute for airplane pilots, French tailor Franz Reichelt jumps from the Eiffel Tower wearing a suit he made with silk wings between the arms. In front of a crowd of onlookers, he falls to his death.



1990

BASE-jumping innovator John Carta, a.k.a. Birdman, who once parachuted onto the observation deck of the World Trade Center and from New York's Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, makes Bat Wings, a crude suit with fabric sewn between the arms and torso. He tests it multiple times, and it influences future wingsuits. He dies in 1990 in a plane crash.



1997

Frenchman Patrick de Gayardon, famous for sky-surfing (using a snowboard during free fall), designs what many consider the modern wingsuit, with inflatable fabric cells between the arms and torso. He jumps from cliffs in Norway and Italy, marking the first wingsuit BASE jumps. He dies the following year testing a modification to his rigging during a jump in Hawaii.

Anbar Province, where he took photos of the action that were later used by command. When I met him, we were both in the 2nd Marine Logistics Group. He went by Corporal Morgan then, but he's got a new job now, and a new identity to go with it: He's a professional wingsuit pilot. And though I never worried about him in Iraq, once he started BASE jumping, that changed.

The wingsuit pilots I've talked to have more dead friends than anyone I've ever met, including combat veterans. "I've lost five friends personally in the past month," Morgan told me in the spring of last year. "There's been a lot of reevaluation going on, but we're still jumping."

This makes me uneasy. Maybe I'm selfish — wishing that a friend will quit doing what he loves because I'm afraid he might die — or maybe it's just a rational response to an extreme activity. Either way, the tension is nothing new to the history of aviation. In his *Wartime Journals*, Charles Lindbergh comes down, unsurprisingly, on the side of the risk takers: "Any coward can sit in his home and criticize a pilot for flying into a mountain in fog. But I would rather, by far, die on a mountainside than in bed." Every nonjumper I talk to has a bit more respect for gravity. "Those guys are crazy" is the continual refrain.

If so, that brand of insanity has made Morgan one of the happiest people I know. And unlike some veterans, he says, he never experienced any sense of dislocation or isolation after leaving the Corps. Perhaps it's because the need for a sense of shared purpose in a high-risk environment that the Marine Corps offers is more than fulfilled by his new occupation. (Both he and Shapiro are sponsored by the gear company KAVU.) In fact, jumping supplanted the Corps while he was still a Marine, and he ultimately passed on a shot at the Special Operations Command in favor of hanging out around East Coast drop zones and jumping from buildings and antennas at night.



Shapiro, left, and Morgan have had several friends die over the past two years.

"I was learning more about myself through BASE jumping than I was learning in the Corps. I was jumping five nights a week, in D.C., Richmond, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. We'd drive three hours for a building."

Now Morgan lives a nomadic life, sleeping in tents or in communal areas near drop zones. "Wingsuiting in America," he says, "adds an entirely different realm to the sport in terms of responsibility. You're in the backcountry — you need to take care of yourself."

At sites like Lauterbrunnen, Switzerland, perhaps the most famous wingsuit BASE-jumping site in the world, gondolas whisk jumpers to the tops of cliffs to fly exits that have been jumped hundreds of times before and land on wide stretches of grassy farmland.

At Yosemite, which boasts similarly suitable cliffs, jumps are done at dusk to help jumpers evade arrest.

"A lot of BASE jumpers are into the whole 'I'm sneaky, I'm a ninja' thing. If I had a choice, every time I jumped, I'd jump in broad daylight," says Morgan. Charley Kurlinkus, an ER doctor in Sacramento, California, and a wingsuit pilot, describes it as the difference "between driving a car down the road in the middle of the day and driving a car down the road in the middle of the night with no lights on [to] make sure no one sees you." Also, late in the day, the wind patterns change. When the sun stops heating air in the bottom of the valley, the cold mountaintop air comes rushing down, slowing wingsuit deployment and causing turbulence.

"BASE jumping's past has an issue with ethics," Morgan says. "In the States, it's assumed you're reckless, you're thrill seekers. I'd like to see it more respected as a mountain sport."

BELOW, FROM LEFT: BARCROFT/GETTY IMAGES; CHINAFOTOPRESS/GETTY IMAGES

1999

Jari Kuosma and Robert Pečnik produce the *BirdMan Classic*, the first commercially available wingsuit.

2005

A crew of Norwegian BASE jumpers releases *Super Terminal*, a DVD that helps invent the term *proximity flying* — in which you fly closer to a cliff rather than away from it.



2006

Australian couple Glenn Singleman and Heather Swan jump off Meru Peak, in India. At 21,850 feet, they set the mark for the highest wingsuit BASE jump ever.

2009

Dean Potter records the longest wingsuit BASE jump, in Switzerland, flying for almost three minutes over nearly four miles.

2012

Brit Gary Connery is the first to land a wingsuit without a parachute — by crashing into a giant pile of cardboard boxes stacked in a field near London.



2013

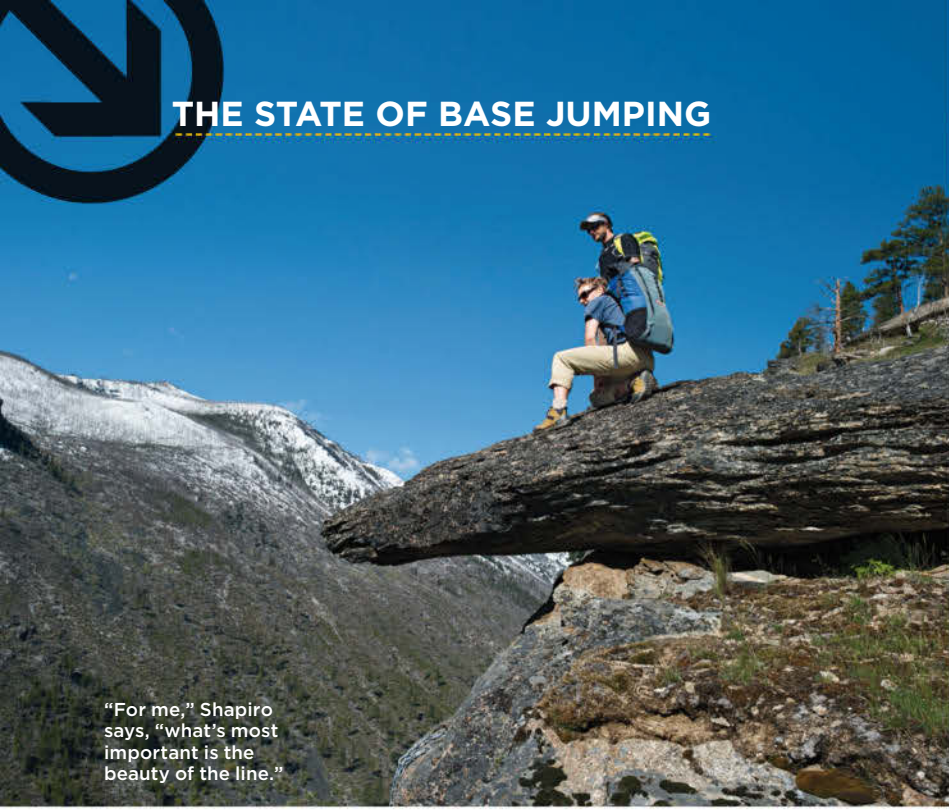
The World Wingsuit League Grand Prix kicks off its second annual competition. Within two years, five of the 15 participants are dead. In total, there are at least 20 fatalities in 2013.

2014

Wingsuiters Vince Reffet and Frédéric Fugon jump from the tallest building on earth, Dubai's 2,717-foot Burj Khalifa. The video racks up 10 million views on YouTube.

2015

With at least nine fatalities, including Dean Potter's, 2015 is on track to be nearly as deadly as 2014 (at least 16 fatalities).



"For me," Shapiro says, "what's most important is the beauty of the line."

"If you take the extreme sports ideal — that more risk is better — to the mountains, the mountains will win every time."

"PRETTY MUCH ANYWHERE you're jumping in Europe, you're landing in big green fields," says Shapiro. We've traveled miles through the Bitterroot Mountains and have yet to see any such luxury. At one bend he points to a tiny, rocky patch near an exit that he and Morgan have flown before. "I've had a friend break a leg here. I've had a couple of friends end up in trees."

"It goes back to the idea of radical self-reliance," Morgan says, "which is what BASE jumping is all about."

Opening a new exit takes time and patience. And before the two jump from a new perch in the Bitterroots, Shapiro has done hours of groundwork to prepare.

"Something I learned in the Corps is that risk is a part of life," Morgan says. "But the extreme sports ideal — that more risk is better — you take that to the mountains, the mountains will win every time."

There's a small landing area near a mountain reservoir surrounded by cliffs. Shapiro takes GPS coordinates and then returns home to study the terrain on Google Earth and other topographic maps, getting a rough estimate of the overall vertical and horizontal distances. This data is key. With most unpowered aircraft — a sailplane or a hang glider, for example — anything over an optimum speed decreases the efficiency of the aircraft's performance due to a corresponding increase in drag as air travels

over the top of the wing. For wingsuits, on the other hand, faster speeds increase performance. A wingsuit pilot who flies flat and slow will have to pull his chute after covering far less distance than a pilot who builds up more speed. Shapiro wants to ensure that at every stage they'll have enough speed to pull away from the terrain if necessary.

His early trips to the site yield a few exits with an acceptable level of risk. The next step is returning to the mountain, using a laser to get exact distances, and walking the cliffs to find an ideal exit point. He rules out his first choice — too little altitude amounting to too much risk — but there's another possible exit, which looks more approachable even though it involves climbing up steep snow in crampons.

Up on the side of a mountain is a cliff that looks to be about 600 to 625 feet high, which is short but jumpable. The slopes beneath it stretch down 2,900 feet to a landing area, after a horizontal distance Shapiro calculates to be around 5,200 feet, meaning they'd need to maintain a glide ratio of about 1.8 feet forward for every foot of descent. That will give them a comfortable enough ratio to fly through the terrain instead of simply flying for maximum performance, since a 1.8:1 ratio gives them enough speed at any given time to pull up if they need to.

"For me, what's most important is the beauty of the line," Shapiro says. "It requires

the same kind of eye a skier has. You're looking for terrain that allows you to highlight your wingsuit with a sense of scale and a sense of speed as you flow with the shape of the mountain."

This line has the right kind of terrain features. Close to the wall is a pillar of rock that extends out, creating a narrow notch in the side of the mountain. Shapiro figures they can fly through the notch, then glide 20 to 30 feet parallel to the wall before covering distance over a tree-filled plateau that has a couple of gaps where they can get within 10 feet of the terrain. To his eye, the line is not simply jumpable — it's elegant.

WE MEET UP AT SHAPIRO'S HOME, a two-story, hipped-roof house he built himself on the outskirts of Missoula, Montana. It's ringed with Tibetan prayer flags, and the inside is filled with photos and artwork related to flight. His mother claims he was a bird in another life. "I wasn't attracted to BASE jumping when it was just falling," Shapiro says. Instead, he got his start as a professional hang glider. He has also worked in industrial design, carpentry, and respiratory care.

During the time he and Morgan are together, they maintain a constant stream of technical chatter: the effects of wind conditions, different styles of packing, the newest exits, wingsuit models, other jumpers' innovations, and whether they're safe or a "stunt," which is a bad word for wingsuiters. Stunts get people killed. They speak in jargon ("Do you tailgate?" Shapiro asks. "Slider up?") and scrutinize new equipment, analyzing the advantages and limitations of a new bridle. Inevitably they discuss what may have caused the death of their friends. Was it the suit? A failure of planning and energy management? The goggles? Or something more nebulous — like jumping in the wrong mind-set? In a sport with as little room for error as BASE jumping has, where the pilot needs to make split-second decisions about terrain features coming at him at more than 100 miles per hour, a distracted or upset pilot is that much closer to a dead pilot.

Given their meticulous, obsessive attention to every detail, you'd almost think they were cautious men. The sport can demand months of work for 50 seconds of flying, particularly in the backcountry. To even reach the point where an individual can proximity fly takes a massive time investment. The general guidelines are at least 200 skydives before attempting a normal BASE jump, then more than 100 BASE jumps with perfect exits before getting into wingsuiting.

Jumpers generally start on bridges, where there is little chance of a bad takeoff sending the jumper back into the object. Next are antennas, then cliffs, and finally buildings. If the jumper has survived that process (an analysis of 20,850 BASE jumps over 10 years at the Kjerag Massif in

The Anatomy of a Wingsuit

SQUIRREL'S NEW AURA 2 IS DESIGNED TO FLY FARTHER, FASTER, AND MORE ACCURATELY THAN ANY SUIT IN HISTORY. HERE'S WHY.

Created by a team of pilots who run the Seattle-based wingsuit company Squirrel, the Aura 2 is a four-pound, \$1,890 nylon suit designed for flying fast over mountain ridges with total control. Wingsuits work like parachutes, providing forward motion while slowing descent. The challenge is to improve glide with the suit in order to delay altitude drop

and fly far, while not slowing so much that you lose the ability to pull away from danger. A suit like the Aura 2 helps the pilot quickly reach speeds of up to 150 miles per hour (critical when BASE jumping) and fly up to three miles, and it can endure several hundred jumps. "We're all birds these days," says Scotty Bob Morgan, a Squirrel test pilot. —**MATT HIGGINS**

HYBRID HARNESS

"You can't be a good BASE jumper if you're not a good skydiver," says Matt Gerdes, a Squirrel co-owner and test pilot. So the Aura 2 is designed for both. Pilots can skydive by exposing the suit's harness and handles or BASE jump by zipping them back inside the suit's chest cavity — improving glide by reducing drag.

LEADING EDGE

The most important aspect of any flight is the ability to quickly pull the parachute. The Aura 2 comes with a stretchy Glideskin along the forearm and wrist, improving range of motion so the pilot can easily reach back for his chute handle. "Flexibility is critical," says Gerdes.

INLETS

During free fall, air rams into the inlets, inflating the suit, giving the wings their shape, and making flight possible. These inlets have been tweaked to reduce drag and strengthened with Mylar to prevent deformities; rib support prevents them from collapsing.

LEG WING

The leg wing provides additional lift and stability. This wing is slim and efficient for increased control, while its tail edge is reinforced with ribs to improve airflow and reduce turbulence.

ARM WINGS

During descent, up to 80 percent of lift is generated by the arm wings, two tightly woven layers of nylon between the arms and the torso. When inflated, these wings have an airfoil shape that is flat on the bottom and curved on top (like an airplane wing). To improve speed without increasing drag, internal ribs on the leading edges limit billowing and help to maintain shape. "Stick your hand out of a moving car," says Morgan. "When thin, it slices right through the air. It's the same idea."



THE STATE OF BASE JUMPING



Graham Hunt preps for an illegal BASE jump from Yosemite's Taft Point, a week before he died launching from the same spot.

Would Legalizing BASE Jumping Make It Safer?

When Dean Potter and Graham Hunt died BASE jumping in Yosemite, on May 16, they ignited a long-smoldering debate about the federal ban on jumping in U.S. national parks. Within days a petition on Change.org began circulating to pressure the National Park Service to end the ban.

For jumpers, the argument is twofold. The ban is arbitrary and outlaws a behavior that poses no threat to anyone but the jumper. More important, making it legal could make it safer.

"If you decriminalize it," says Rick Harrison, director of the United States BASE Association, "people can jump in full daylight, from the best exit points, using their best gear."

BASE advocates argue that the ban encourages the use of older gear — cheaper to replace if rangers confiscate it — and leaping from cliffs at dusk, when rangers can't see them. That's also when winds are unpredictable and shadows wreak havoc on a jumper's depth perception.

"That's why I quit doing illegal jumps," says professional BASE jumper Jeb Corliss. "Because you end up jumping in darker conditions or a bad wind."

Park officials say safety isn't the issue. "We get 4 million visitors a year,"

says Yosemite spokesman Scott Gediman. "People come here to hike, fish, and enjoy the natural beauty, so we look at the impact of every activity on every other activity." Mountain biking, for example, is prohibited to protect hikers and trails; concerts are outlawed because of the noise.

In 1980 the park attempted a brief trial run at legalization: Crowds gathered, jumpers rode bicycles and skateboards off El Capitan, and, says Harrison, one group of skydivers even drove a flatbed truck up a wilderness hiking trail. "There was a circus-like atmosphere," he says. Skepticism deepened in 1999 when a skydiver named Jan Davis made a protest jump off El Capitan, in full view of rangers, to prove the sport's safety. She failed to open her parachute and hit at terminal velocity. "I'll never forget that," says Gediman. "The ground shook. Car alarms went off. A ranger who worked with me freaked out."

BASE jumping is legal in much of Europe. The Swiss town of Lauterbrunnen, for example, sees 15,000 to 20,000 jumps annually. But there are still risks. An average of six BASE jumpers die each year in Switzerland, and farmers

have complained about deaths in their fields. But the Swiss BASE Association now mitigates this with a jumper's code of ethics and "landing cards" authorizing landing only in designated areas. Swiss authorities also require jumpers to carry liability and rescue insurance.

Harrison argues that a similar system could work in the U.S.: Jumpers could be required to prove sufficient experience, and remote cliffs like Half Dome could be opened to the sport while highly visible ones like El Capitan remain illegal.

But pushing the limits is central to BASE-jumping culture, and even with those measures, there still could be fatalities as jumpers test their bounds.

"In theory, it should be safer from big cliffs like El Cap," says Chris McNamara, a leading U.S. wingsuiter, "because you can fly farther away from the face before you open your parachute, but then you have people like me thinking, 'Why fly safely when I can buzz all this terrain and have the most incredible sensation known to humans?'"

For now, though, all these arguments are purely theoretical. "It's illegal," Gediman says. "And we have no intention of changing that." —DANIEL DUANE

Norway, considered one of the safest sites to cliff jump, found a fatality rate of 1 in every 2,317 jumps), he or she can move on to wingsuits. In *The Great Book of BASE*, a handbook for BASE jumpers published in 2010, Matt Gerdes recommends having more than 100 wingsuit skydives before attempting a wingsuit BASE jump. Then a wingsuiter's skill needs to be slowly developed until a larger, higher-performance suit can be used. And as for when to start proximity flying?

"People who have to ask, 'Am I ready?' — they're not ready," Shapiro says.

ON THE MORNING OF the jump, Shapiro gets Nya ready for school before heading to the mountains. It takes miles of hard biking up a rocky path, occasionally fording a stream created by the May snowmelt, before he and Morgan get to the proposed landing area on the side of a mountain reservoir. There's a slight breeze moving across the water. A little bit of wind upslope can help wingsuits deploy faster. Too much wind can be deadly.

"See that small cliff?" Morgan asks. "That's a straight shot."

"That's farther back than you'd think," his friend tells him. "By the time we get up to the top, it might be convective."

They've looked at the line on maps and satellite imagery, but it's here, where they can walk the actual terrain features they'll be flying over, that they fine-tune their plan. One change is that while Morgan will still go through the small notch close to the exit point, Shapiro will go wide to avoid possible turbulence in Morgan's wake. It's a slight shift toward less risk in a jump that would have been unthinkable dangerous until very recently.

Both men use Squirrel Wingsuits' Aura, first released in mid-2013, which allows for more aggressive jumps and shorter drops. The Aura's wings don't need to be unzipped for pilots to control their chutes. Plus, its improved force-feed inlet system inflates the suit, mimicking a sports car spoiler to increase speed and stability.

With its new features, the Aura inflates in under three seconds. But there's no way the cliffs surrounding us offer more than a few seconds of free fall: The men will have to inflate quickly and maneuver their wingsuits to get away from the mountain so they can begin soaring downslope. Either that, or die.

It's a steep climb to the top, with a bit of exploring and backtracking around cliffs and blind couloirs, as ticks continually leap from the trees onto the men. "They're the original BASE jumpers," Shapiro jokes, flicking one away. "I have this weird superstition. I don't kill bugs on the way up. It's, like, I could be squished like a bug. I don't want to squish a bug."

Halfway up they don crampons, kicking steps into the steep snow slope as they con-

tinue their ascent to what, from the bottom, appear to be two viable cliffs.

One is covered in snow and loose rock. Immediately below is a ledge both men would have to clear, with no alternative route if something bad happened. It's jumpable but suboptimal, and they climb to the second cliff. "This has an open lane you can sneak out of if you need to," Shapiro says.

The day is clear, with a slight updraft. Ideal conditions. They toss rocks from the ledge and count as they fall. A rock drop is not simply about determining the length of the fall but also about observing how close the rock gets to objects below. Striking a cliff face is almost always deadly, and the shape of a mountain can produce optical illusions.

"One one hundred, two one hundred, three one hundred, four one hundred, five one hundred," Morgan counts. Then the rock hits.

"Five," Shapiro says. "Five's full on, but it's good."

CONFIDENT THAT THE line is flyable, the pilots step back from the edge and prepare to jump. When everything is working, Shapiro feels a sense of relaxation right before an exit. "I feel the wind on my skin," he explains. "I feel the sun, I hear the birds behind me, I feel hyper-present, and it's really kind of chill." It's a moment of facing his own mortality, he says, but in a deliberate way that allows him to separate what is trivial from what is important in his life. He thinks it makes him more present as a husband and father.

"The feeling is like sailing across an ocean to a place you're not sure is there, and then you find it," he says. "And then I come to my wife and ask, 'How was your day?' And I'm asking because I really care. I want to know."

Morgan focuses more on the aesthetics of the experience. "When you fly something for the first time, it's like you're looking at a painting for the first time," he says. "You're looking at the terrain at an angle and a speed that are unique."

There's not much conversation as they ready their gear, donning their wingsuits and checking their pins, bridles, deployment positions, goggles, the weather, and, finally, their emotional states. Not worn in flight, wingsuits look somewhat ridiculous. The fabric hangs limp, unactivated by the air, the sight reminiscent of a child who has wrapped himself in bedsheets to create a makeshift toga.

Then Scotty Bob Morgan prepares to jump off, leaning forward with both feet on the edge and then, almost gently, pushing off, more of a hop than a dive. Shapiro immediately follows. The calm movements of the men and the silence in the mountains are almost anticlimactic. I'd expected to find it thrilling — that my heart rate would rise when they stepped off the cliff, or at the very least that I'd feel some kind of projected empathetic fear, but instead I find the scene quite beautiful, almost serene. They drop down, their wings catch the air, and they fly out from the cliff, curving around a rocky outcropping, looking like nothing more than giant, colorful birds. **MD**

The Master Flyer

JEB CORLISS, THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS WINGSUIT PILOT, WEIGHS IN ON THE FUTURE OF HIS SPORT.

Jeb Corliss has flown within a 30-foot crack in a cliff on live TV, shot through a waterfall with a wingsuit, and garnered 29 million YouTube views for a video of his flight through a slot canyon in Switzerland. The 39-year-old has also seen a friend torn apart from flying into a bridge railing, broken his back by hitting a rock wall, and broken both his legs crashing into South Africa's Table Mountain. "I am the guy who knows 100 percent that this sport is going to kill me," says Corliss. "That makes me take it very seriously."

How do you persist in the face of so many people dying?

That's nothing new. Since I've been in this sport, I've watched on average six people die a year. I didn't get into it thinking I was collecting stamps. I knew it was dangerous, and I've continued doing it after getting seriously injured. I never pretended it was safe, because it's not.

You mentioned the injuries.

What are the worst ones? Well, I've had so many. My first was jumping off a 220-foot bridge in Northern California. I landed hard and folded my left foot in half so that my toes

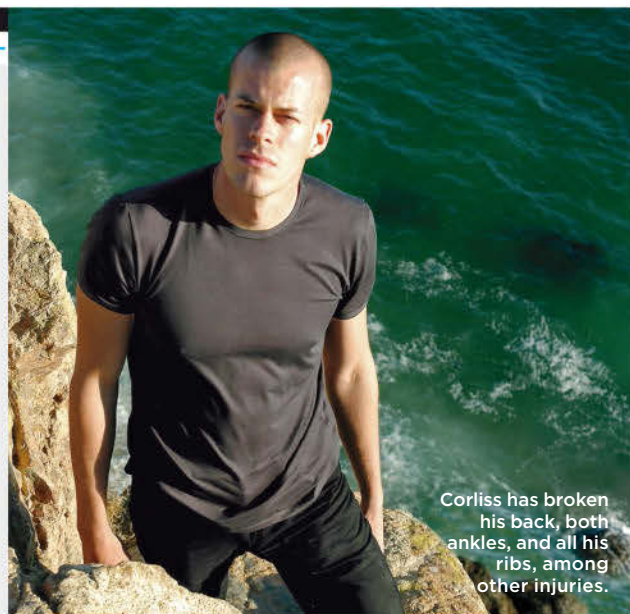
touched my ankle. Then in South Africa, in 1999, I jumped off Howick Falls and got a 90-degree off-heading opening that took me into the waterfall. I broke my back in three places. I was lying in the water below and I couldn't move, and the blood of my wounds attracted freshwater crabs that ate me alive. It was a mind-altering experience.

What's the appeal of wingsuit flying, where you use a suit to create glide once you're in the air, versus BASE jumping, where you essentially jump and pull your chute?

Regular BASE is super-terrifying, because you're always close to the wall. The problem with wingsuit flying is that it's just not scary. It gives you this false feeling that you have total control. It's very peaceful, even when you're doing it really close to a cliff. It's like that dream of flying when you're a kid.

Wingsuit pilots are now racing in competitions. Is that the future of the sport?

Yes. It's growing massively in China. Last year we had TV viewerships in the hundreds of millions — at least in Asia. Now we're hoping to bring that to the United States. In the next five



Corliss has broken his back, both ankles, and all his ribs, among other injuries.

years, you're going to see wingsuit pilots making real athlete-style money.

Will new designs make suits safer and perform better?

Honestly, we're getting incredible performance out of wingsuits right now. So the next revolution will have to be in materials, like those dimples on golf balls that make them fly 20 percent farther.

What's your next stunt?

We found a section of the Great Wall of China that's on top of a 400-foot hill. The wall is about 30 feet tall, and there's a 30-foot tower on top of that. We're going

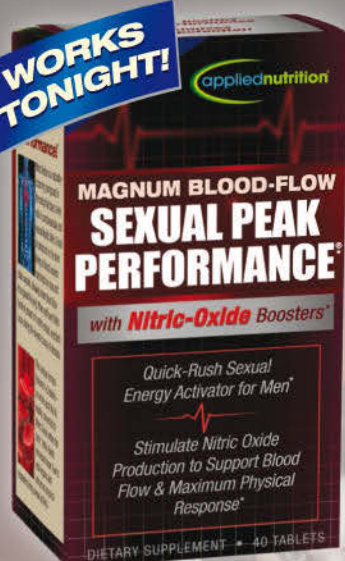
to suspend a floating target from the tower. I'll fly right down the Great Wall, hit that target with my head, and then deploy my chute. If everything goes perfect, I'll be fine.

How do you go through with something like this when you may be killed on live TV?

If you walk into an octagon for an MMA fight thinking, "This guy is going to be friendly," then he's going to break your legs. That's how I look at wingsuit flying. It's about getting into that ring and out of that ring in one piece. I look at every jump like it's out to kill me. —DANIEL DUANE

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SECRETS OF A SECRET AGENT *continued from page 86*

thing he'll ever do. "If you whiff it," Matthews says, "the agent is dead."

We pull up to the Gardens on El Paseo, an upscale shopping arcade that Matthews calls "the Rodeo Drive of Palm Springs." There's an Ann Taylor and a Brooks Brothers, and lots of retirees and moms with babies out for a stroll. On the corner in front of Williams-Sonoma, we meet the person who's going to be our target for the day: Matthews' lovely wife, Suzanne.

Suzanne joined the CIA in 1975, a year before Matthews. They met on his first tour, her second, and got married the tour after that — thereby becoming what the agency calls a "tandem couple," or a pair of married spies. Suzanne later went part-time, but they still worked operations together. In one Eastern-bloc country in the mid-'80s, they were assigned to make contact with a compromised asset's wife in order to smuggle her to the West, and Suzanne was the one who rolled out of the car during a snowstorm with surveillance on her tail to make the approach, not knowing if a team of thugs would be waiting for her. As Matthews recalls: "I spent a harrowing three hours playing darts and drinking beer at the Canadian embassy while my bride did the dangerous job of cold-knocking on the apartment door." (As it turned out, the wife had already been arrested.)

Today Matthews and I are playing a foreign surveillance team keeping eyes on Suzanne, a CIA officer. We follow from a distance as she drifts in and out of stores, browsing merchandise. Matthews explains how she's keeping tabs on us with her peripheral vision instead of using amateur tricks like reflections in windows or pretending to tie her shoes — both giveaways that she's "surveillance conscious" and thus possibly operational. We trail her for about 45 minutes, using tourists to screen ourselves while we scan the crowd for her blue sweater. Nothing she does ever seems fishy, but when we meet up afterward, it turns out she made a dead drop in a cactus planter, retrieved a package from a flower bed, and left three signals for agents, including Vaseline on an escalator handrail and Scotch tape on the door to Saks. "So those are just some examples of different ways things can be done," Suzanne says over lunch at Tommy Bahama. "But in real life you'd only do one of them, and it would take a month of planning."

By the early Nineties, the couple had two young daughters and were still posted overseas. Now they were like a reverse of Keri Russell and Matthew Rhys on *The Americans*: two married CIA officers raising children undercover. Paradoxically, says Matthews, this sometimes made Suzanne *more* effective: "No one expects the lady with the baby carriage to be picking up dead drops." They kept

their work secret — as far as the girls knew, they just had boring office jobs — but every once in a while reality intruded.

In one Mediterranean country, Matthews was station chief when his name appeared on a terrorist group's hit list. He got an armed security detail and a car with ballistic glass. When his guards used mirrors to check under his car for bombs, he and Suzanne told their daughters they were "looking for kitty cats." By far the scariest moment was pulling up to the front steps of the kindergarten each morning, because it was a scheduled stop. "Any known place," Matthews says, "that's where the X gets drawn."

In the late 1990s, during the Kosovo War, the family had to flee the Balkans-area embassy they were posted in, and their home was looted and burned. (It just happened to be their younger daughter's eighth birthday. "We evacuated the cake," jokes Suzanne.) When they got back to the States, Matthews took a job at Langley, and they thought they were done going overseas. At this point they decided it was safe to tell the girls. As Suzanne recalls it: "We took them to see *Spy Kids*, which had just come out. And then we told them they were spy kids!"

"We were such little brats. We were just like, 'OK — can we go play now?'" recalls their younger daughter, Sophie, 24. The couple then made the girls promise that if anybody ever asked what they did — teachers, friends, friends' parents — they would stick to the story that they worked for the State Department. "I always knew my line," Sophie says. "Even today, if I don't want to have a long conversation about it, I still say State Department, because no one cares."

Sophie was just in second grade when she found out the truth, so she never suspected anything out of the ordinary, apart from occasionally wondering why her dad's business trips lasted a month. "But now I really enjoy hearing those stories," she says. "They were so badass — my mom is out there rolling out of cars, and meanwhile she's home making me Kraft macaroni and cheese for dinner. Now that I'm old enough to appreciate it, there's really no other word for it — it's just really cool."

MATTHEWS' LAST JOB before his retirement was station chief in Los Angeles. ("I think I can probably say that.") Retiring in California saved him from joining one of the outfits he calls Beltway Bandits, in which former spies return to Langley as private contractors. ("It's *Groundhog Day*, man. Same shit meals in the cafeteria — only your badge is a different color.") But he still needed a hobby and, as he jokes, he doesn't fish. For a while he worked as a consultant on a J.J. Abrams show called *Undercovers*, about a pair of married ex-CIA officers who start a catering company but find themselves dragged back in. (He found it

silly: "It's two black officers — they couldn't really go undercover in North Korea, but if you insist..." He says he wrote the first draft of *Red Sparrow* "as much for therapy" as with any hope that it would be published. But he happened to know an entertainment lawyer who happened to know a high-powered literary agent, and before he knew it, his manuscript had sparked a bidding war.

"In retrospect, it wasn't because the book or my writing was so good," Matthews says. "It's because I was a former spook."

These days Matthews writes at home, in a wood-paneled office under a map of the Turkish Aegean coast, where his grandfather grew up. On one side of the room are bookshelves of Cold War memorabilia — a Minox spy camera, a red Mao clock — along with "some of the bullshit" from his CIA years, like the two medals he won for distinguished and exceptional service. "At the end of the day, that's my career," he jokes. "Dusty medals on a bookcase."

If you're in the market for a clear-eyed, skeptical take on the CIA, Matthews is not your guy. He's a lifer, a true believer, a company man proud of his service. "Not to get too corny about it," he says, "but we did stuff for our country." In his books, field officers are good guys "who accomplished heroics from the depths of the shadows." He defends the agency against criticism

over faulty WMD intelligence in Iraq, says enhanced interrogation "got information, thwarted plans, saved lives," and calls Jose Rodriguez, the CIA official who helped oversee the waterboarding program, "a fantastic guy." "It's horrendous out there," he says of the world. "You've got to get tough to tell the brutes to stop."

At the end of the day, he says, the personal costs of the job — the years of putting other people in harm's way for the theoretical greater good — don't weigh on him. "We're not choirboys," he says. "But it didn't bother me, because I was doing it for my country and what I thought were the right reasons. Sometimes it turns bad, and that's a gut punch. To lose someone who's shown tremendous courage and with whom you've developed a friendship... there is mourning and depression and stuff. But if it bothers you, you couldn't sustain yourself for 33 years."

In his new book, *Palace of Treason*, Matthews writes about a fictional CIA plot against a real-life nuclear-enrichment facility in Natanz, Iran. This is a world he knows deeply: After returning to Langley, he spent five years helping to supervise the CIA's Counterproliferation Division, where he collected intelligence about nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons around the globe, "trying to figure out the supply chain so we could disrupt it, starve

it, and cut it off." Long-term, he thinks, the greatest threat to America's national security is China, "but short-term it's the Iranian nuclear program. If the Iranians have a bomb? Holy crap. They could sit at any conference table with a nuke in their pocket and become a player."

Matthews believes the world is full of threats right now — which is why he believes case officers in the field, as opposed to drones and mass surveillance, are so necessary. "I have to guard against saying it was better in the good old days," he says. "But if you step back and look at the sum total of the global war on terror, you could argue that we lost some of the classic skill of HUMINT," or human intelligence. "The Pentagon's definition of intelligence is 'What does the bridge over the next hill look like?' But if we want to recruit a Syrian defense minister, it takes 10 years. It's two totally different things."

It won't be him recruiting those ministers — he's out of the game. Matthews says the Hollywood stories about grizzled expies getting called for one last job are just that: stories. Once you're out, you're out. But that doesn't mean he doesn't feel the pull sometimes.

"The curse of our life," he says, "is that Suzanne or I will be reading the paper, and we'll run into the other room and say, 'This is bullshit! Here's what the *real* story is.'" **MD**

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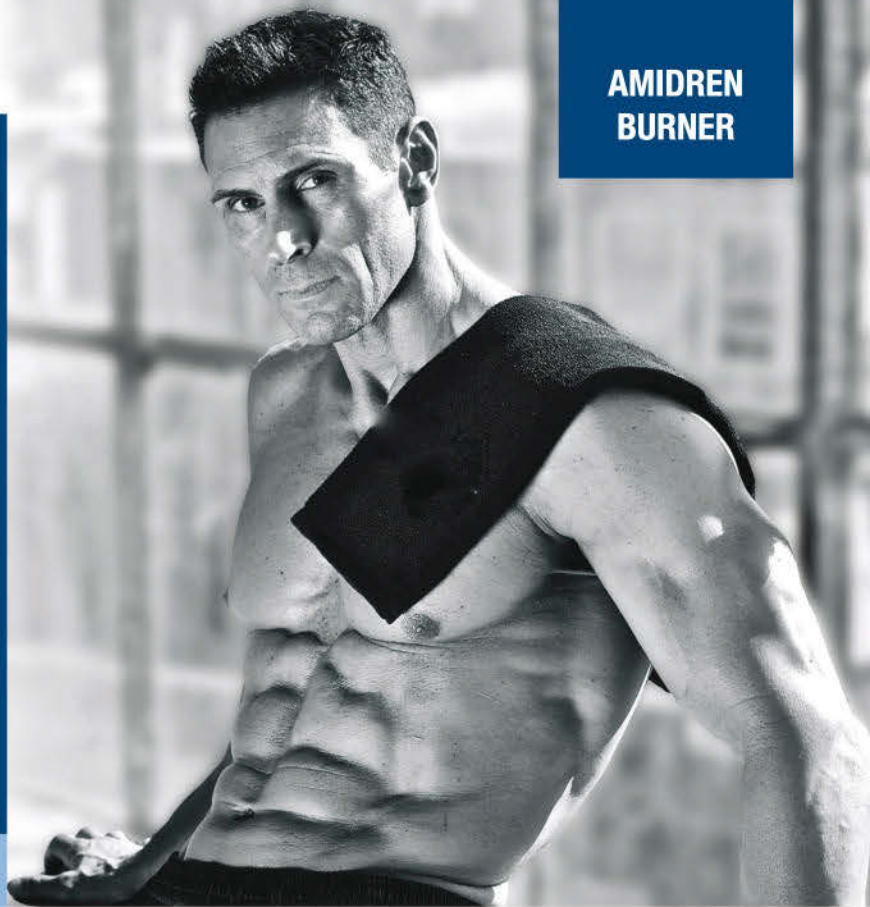
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*Kaiman, et al., Current Therapeutic Research, 2000; 61:35-442.

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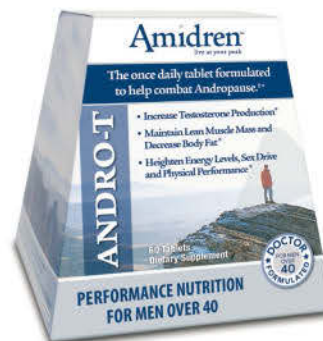
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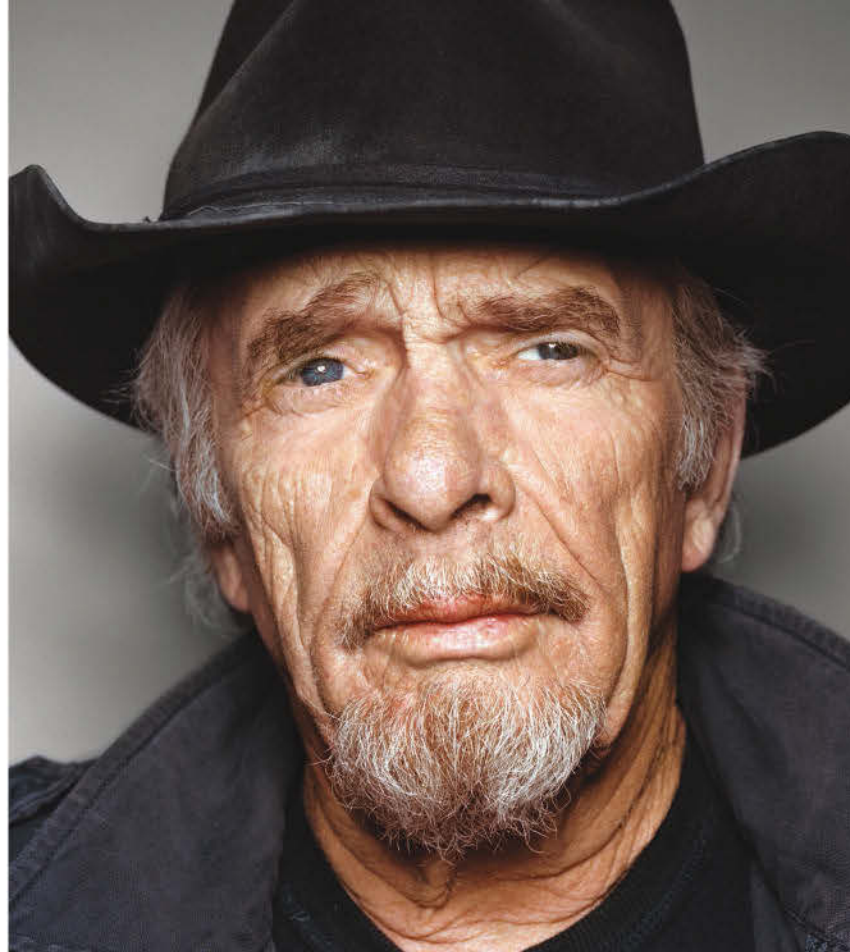
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Country's badass legend on smoking pot, surviving prison, and missing Johnny Cash.

What's the best advice you've gotten?

My father hated a liar. He died when I was nine, but if I learned anything from him, I learned that.

What was it like growing up poor?

I grew up in a family that didn't have anything. We all worked, so we never went hungry, but there was never too much. I wanted to better myself, but I took off in the wrong direction. When I woke up in San Quentin, I was about 21, and I realized how far I'd gone in the wrong direction.

What did prison teach you?

Honesty. In that environment, if you tell someone you're gonna do something on a Tuesday, you better do it, because you can't get away from them.

What have you learned about dealing with the law?

I believe that if you break the law and get

caught, you should go to jail. But we're in a hard time in America now, with all the trouble with police in the cities. Prison is the biggest business in America. Bigger than marijuana! You got the money, you can build a prison out in Nevada and it'll be filled before you finish building it. That's a fact, and that's a shame.

On the new record, there's a song, "Missing Ol' Johnny Cash." What did his friendship mean to you?

Johnny Cash was a special friend to me. We understood each other — we had the same upbringing, the same sense of humor. One time we were doing a television show and he was talking about playing San Quentin in 1958, and I said, "You didn't have a voice that day, Cash!" And he turned around like, "How the hell would you know?" And I said, "I was there." It blew him backwards. One time later he said to me, "Merle, you're what people think I am." "Oh, no." I said. "I've

just done hard time. There's not that much difference between you and me." I really miss him.

What keeps you going on the road?

I think if I were to give it up, I'd dry out and blow away. It's great to have the audience standing up for an ovation every time I leave. It's hard to walk away from that.

Do you still get as excited on the stage?

It's still a thrill, still exciting, and still scary. It's physically demanding. And at my age, 78, I don't know if I can stand up there 90 minutes or not. I asked my manager, "When's the last time you tried to sing for an hour?" And he said, "Hell, I can't even watch an hour!"

What advice would you give the younger you?

I'd tell him put on his seat belt. Metaphorically. Because it's gonna get rough.

So you enjoy marijuana, but some of your most famous lyrics put it down.

At the time I wrote "Okie From Muskogee," I didn't smoke. It was '68. I had been brainwashed like most of America about what marijuana would and wouldn't do. I thought it was responsible for the flower children walking around with their mouths open. It was not so. But if a guy doesn't learn anything in 50 years, there's something wrong with him. I've learned a lot about it, and America has, too.

You also cover Bob Dylan on the new record. Is that because he called you out in a speech he made at a Grammys event earlier this year?

I'm still trying to digest that. I don't know what that's all about. I always admired him, from the minute I first heard of him. Never had an ill thought about the guy. I think he's a bit paranoid. He might be smoking the wrong stuff.

What do you want your legacy to be?

I don't know. It's not over yet.

—INTERVIEW BY SEAN WOODS

Haggard teamed up with Willie Nelson on the new *Django and Jimmie*. He will be touring through the fall.



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